HARDEE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ALL HAZARDS GUIDE

✔ Plan ✔ Prepare ✔ Pass It On

Hardee County Emergency Management

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Dear Residents and Visitors,

Hardee County is a wonderful place to live, work and play. We are all indeed fortunate to live in Central Florida, where the weather is mild, sunny and great for outdoor recreation. However, being in the sub-tropical climate, the environment and weather can change rapidly. There are a number of natural and man-made hazards that pose threats to our area and way of life. Potential threats include hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfire, lightning, flooding, hazardous material incidents, and terrorism.

Most of us realize the importance of making a plan to address at least some hazards. Unfortunately, realization and preparation seldom prevent a disaster. However, well prepared people and property survive more often, recover more easily and return to normal more quickly. Many of the preparations are universal for all of the above threats, including a family disaster and a family emergency plan. We ask that you take that step and develop a culture of preparedness in your own home or business. Then, share the message and plans with those around you.

Hardee County is dedicated to helping communities prepare for disasters through training, public education and other activities. Hardee County promotes training for all county employees and participates in drills and exercises with other agencies in and out of the county so we can respond faster and more efficiently to help you in your time of need.

This All Hazards Guide is published to assist you in preparing your family and property for a number of potentially significant hazards. Please take some time to read this guide and prepare your own personal and business plan. This guide is designed to answer many questions you might ask in preparing to deal with these natural and manmade events. You can use it as a guide in making your plan to survive the threats posed by these hazards. Keep it in a convenient location where you can find it easily throughout the year. Prepare yourself, your family, your property, your business and your pet(s) to survive before some uninvited hazard comes our way.

If you would like to follow us on facebook, you can “like” us on Facebook at Hardee County Emergency Management. We hope you enjoy our wonderful county and the communities that make it thrive! May you and your family have a wonderful and safe year.

Planning for a safe tomorrow,

Jill Newman, Director

COMMISSIONERS

District I — Colon Lambert
District II — Sue Birge
District III — Rick Knight
District IV — Russell Melendy
District V — Mike Thompson

HURRICANE SUPPLY LIST

"The first 72 hours is on you"

Water — at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days

Food — at least enough for 3 to 7 days, non-perishable packaged or canned food & juices, foods for infants,elderly or diabetics,snack foods,non-electric can opener, cooking tools, fuel, paper plates, plastic utensils

Bedding — blankets, pillows, cots, blow up mattress, etc.

Clothing — seasonal, rain gear, sturdy shoes, rubber boats, hat

First Aid Kit — Medicine, Prescription Drugs, extra oxygen, bandages, sting relief, ointments

Special Items — for babies and the elderly

Toiletries — hygiene items, moisture wipes, razors, shaving cream, etc. Flashlight I with extra batteries

Radio — battery-operated and NOAA weather radio

Cash — banks and ATMs may not be open or available for extended periods.

Keys, toys, books and games, portable DVD player with movies, iPod — for kids and adults

Important Documents — in a waterproof container

Insurance — check your insurance policy to make sure you have adequate insurance coverage to replace your home, furnishing, clothing, food, appliances (things are more expensive today), check on flood insurance (you may need it due to wind driven rain — many insurance companies have dropped the wind driven rain coverage) it is better to be safe than sorry

Medical records, bank account numbers, credit card numbers and account information, Social Security card, birth certificate, etc.

famlly heirlooms and pictures cannot be replaced (scan your family photos and keep In a safe place on a CD or thumb drive)

Document all valuables with videotape if possible or use a camera (a written record of all Items, cost, brand name, etc. will help you with your insurance claim). This will help save time and you will not have to try and recall each item after a disaster when you may be stressed and not thinking clearly.

Tools — keep a set with you during the storm (for propane tank shut off, quick repairs and such), tarps if possible to prevent further damage to your home, chainsaw for debris (use caution and proper care). Vehicle fueltanks filled.

Pet care items — proper identification, immunization records, ample supply of food and water, a carrier or cage, medications, muzzle and leash treats

Cleaning supplies — Bleach, garbage bags, plastic tubs, dish soap, disinfectant (the faster you get things cleaned up, the less you lose to mold and the elements)

Extra items — bug spray, sun block, safety glasses, etc.

CAUTION — USE EXTREME CAUTION WHEN USING A GENERATOR, OIL LAMPS OR OTHER COMBUSTIBLE ITEMS.

***Hint** — Money is tight these days, so make out your hurricane survival list, then purchase a few extra canned goods or items from your list each time you go to the store. Put them on a hurricane shelf or in an emergency box. This will help ensure you have adequate supplies in case of a storm. Then just keep rotating them out and you will be prepared each year.

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The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

In 1971 civil engineer, Herbert Saffir and meteorologist Dr. Robert Simpson developed the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale. The initial scale showed the expected damage to structures based upon wind speed and storm surge effects.

In 2010, the National Hurricane Center removed storm surge and barometric pressure from the Saffir-Simpson Scale, turning it into the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. The scale provides examples of the type of damage and impacts in the United States associated with winds of the indicated intensity. The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale provides information on wind impacts only and does not provide commentary or information on the other impacts or characteristics associated with tropical cyclones.

Category One Hurricane:

Sustained winds of 74-95 mph, 64-82 kt, or 119-153 km/hr. Very dangerous winds will produce some damage. People, pets, and livestock could be injured or killed by flying or falling debris.

Older (pre-1994 construction) mobile homes could be destroyed, especially if they are not anchored properly. Newer mobile homes that are anchored properly can sustain damage to shingles or metal roof coverings, loss of vinyl siding, as well as damage to carports, sunrooms, or lanais. Poorly built frame homes can experience major damage. Unprotected windows may break if struck by flying debris. Masonry chimneys can be toppled. Well-built frame homes can experience damage to roof shingles, vinyl siding, soffit panels, and gutters. Overhead doors may fail if not secured properly. Failure of aluminum, screened-in enclosures can occur. Roof coverings and siding may be partially removed. Broken glass will pose a threat, and there may be damage to commercial signage, fences, and canopies.

Large branches of trees will snap, and trees may topple. Extensive damage to power lines and poles will likely result in power outages.

Category Two Hurricane:

Sustained winds of 96-110 mph, 83-95 kt, or 154-177 km/hr. Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage. Substantial risk of injury or death to people, pets, and livestock due to flying and falling debris.

Older (pre-1994 construction) mobile homes have a very high chance of being destroyed. Newer mobile homes can also be destroyed. Poorly built frame homes have a high chance of having their roof structures removed, especially if not anchored properly. Unprotected windows will have a high chance of being broken by flying debris. Well-built frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Failure of aluminum, screened-in enclosures will be common. Unreinforced masonry walls can collapse. High percentage of roof and siding damage to buildings. Windows in high-rise buildings can be broken. Broken glass will pose a significant danger, and commercial signage, fences, and canopies will be damaged or destroyed.

Many shallow rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted. Near-total power loss is expected; clean water could become scarce due to system failures.

Category Three Hurricane:

Sustained winds of 111-129 mph, 96-112 kt, or 178-208 km/hr. Devastating damage will occur. High risk of injury or death to people, pets, and livestock due to debris.

Nearly all older (pre-1994) mobile homes will be destroyed. Most newer mobile homes will sustain severe damage with potential for complete roof failure and wall collapse. Poorly built frame homes can be destroyed. Well-built frame homes can experience major damage. Unprotected windows will be broken by flying debris. Isolated structural damage to wood or steel framing can occur. Complete failure of older metal buildings is possible, and older unreinforced masonry buildings can collapse. High percentage of roof and siding damage to buildings. Numerous windows will be blown out of high-rise buildings, and most commercial signage, fences, and canopies will be destroyed.

Many trees will be snapped or uprooted. Electricity and water will be unavailable.

Category Four Hurricane:

Sustained winds of 130-156 mph, 113-136 kt, or 209-251 km/hr. Catastrophic damage will occur. Very high risk of injury or death to people, pets, and livestock due to debris.

Nearly all older (pre-1994) and a high percentage of newer mobile homes will be destroyed. Poorly built homes can sustain complete collapse of all walls as well as the loss of the roof structure. Well-built homes can sustain severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Extensive damage to roof coverings, windows, and doors will occur. Windborne debris will break most unprotected windows and penetrate some protected windows. High percentage of structural damage to the top floors of apartment buildings. High percentage of collapse in older unreinforced masonry buildings. Steel frame in older industrial buildings can collapse. Most windows will be blown out of high-rise buildings, and nearly all-commercial signage, fences, and canopies will be destroyed.

Most trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate areas. Power outages and long-term water shortages may last for many months; most of the area will be uninhabitable during that period.

Category Five Hurricane:

Sustained winds greater than 157mph, greater than 137 kt, or greater than 252 km/hr. Catastrophic damage will occur. Very high risk of injury or death to people, pets, and livestock from debris, even if indoors in mobile homes or framed homes.

Almost complete destruction of all mobile homes will occur, regardless of age or construction. High percentage of frame homes will be destroyed. Extensive damage to roof covers, windows, and doors will occur. Windborne debris damage will occur to nearly all unprotected windows and many protected windows. Complete collapse of many older metal buildings can occur. Most unreinforced masonry walls will fail leading to the collapse of buildings. Significant damage to wood roofs will occur. High percentage of industrial and low-rise apartment buildings will be destroyed. Nearly all windows will be blown out of high-rise buildings, and nearly all-commercial signage, fences, and canopies will be destroyed.

Nearly all trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate areas. Power outages and long-term water shortages may last for many months; most of the area will be uninhabitable during that period.

Hurricane Hazards

Living in Southwest Florida means that each year from June 1st through November 30th we are at risk of being impacted by a hurricane. Unfortunately, previous hurricane seasons are not accurate indicators of our present risk each year. Whether it is forecasted to be a "higher than average," "average," or "lower than average" season, activity-wise, our risk is the same. It only ever takes one hurricane to affect a community!

Wind

Hurricanes are categorized by sustained winds of 74 mph to 157+ mph. Wind caused damage are to some degree dependent upon the local building codes in effect, how well, and how long they have been enforced.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes may form in the rain bands of a hurricane and cause significant damage. Tornadoes are commonly found in the right front quadrant of the storm. These tornadoes are not as intense as those in the Midwest tornado belt, but they can inflict tremendous damage with little or no warning.

Storm Surge

Storm surge is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm that moves ashore prior to and during a hurricane making landfall. As the storm makes landfall, inundation levels (depth of water above ground level) of 2 to 30 feet may occur along the coastal areas, and major rivers of Southwest Florida. This is enough to inundate most populated areas.

Damage severity depends upon the hurricane's size, forward speed, its direction of movement and intensity. Storm surge has the potential to cause the greatest loss of life, cripple communications, cause sewers and storm water basins to back up and contaminate drinking water supplies. Storm surge can leave road, streets and bridges filled with sand, debris and, in some cases structurally unstable.

Heavy Rain

Over the past 30 years, freshwater flooding has caused more drowning deaths than storm surge flooding. Torrential rains associated with slow moving, or stationary, tropical storms and hurricanes on average can produce 16 inches of rain within a 24 – 36 hour period. Heavy rains can create massive health problems and have a disastrous effect on a community's ability to recover quickly.

Anticipate flooding.

When a Hurricane or Tropical Storm Threatens Southwest Florida

As a hurricane or tropical storm moves closer to Southwest Florida, your local Emergency Management Agency will be activated. Emergency Management personnel will remain in frequent contact with the National Hurricane Center and the local National Weather Service office to closely monitor the development and progress of the hurricane or tropical storm.

Your local Emergency Management Agency will utilize the area media outlets to provide frequent updates on the storm, recommend emergency protective actions, and issue evacuation orders.

Storm Surge Considerations in Southwest Florida

Many of our coastal roads used as evacuation routes could be underwater well in advance of the storm, restricting your use of them as evacuation routes. Be prepared to evacuate early and inland to avoid the high winds and heavy rains that precede the arrival of a storm.

If you do not evacuate when ordered you will be without fire rescue, law enforcement or emergency medical support until the waters subside.

Please consult the "Emergency Information" on page 28 for media outlets and the NOAA Weather Radio FIPS code for your county.

Plan! Prepare! Pass it on!

Each Spring the clock "springs forward" one hour, batteries get changed in smoke detectors and we scramble to file our taxes on time. This is also the time to make, or review, your Emergency Disaster Plan. Many of the same documents you use to complete your taxes are important to your Emergency Disaster Plan. Creating an Emergency Disaster Plan does not have to be an overwhelming, or time consuming endeavor.

On any ordinary day you may have some ideas about the hazards in your community that put you at risk, and how you would respond to those risks if they became actual emergencies. The key is to write down those hazards and your response plan(s).

Plan!

Every good plan starts with a hazard analysis. "What am I at risk from?" This depends on where you live – in the country, in the state, and in your county. As a Florida resident, your risks are primarily from naturally occurring incidents: thunderstorms, lightning, structure fire, tornados, fresh water flooding, drought, wildland fires and hurricanes.

Many of these risks are common and require small or minimal response on your part (e.g. staying indoors, clearing brush from around your home, or watering restrictions). A few however are not as frequent and when they occur, the effects are widespread and may even require you to evacuate to another building, or another area of the state.

Once you've made a list of the hazards you face, the next step is evaluate what you need in order to respond to those hazards. For the more common and "smaller" hazards this can be as simple as having a designated meeting place and phone number for family members to call should you become separated, an evacuation map of your home in case of fire, and a family/friend/ hotel/motel nearby you will stay at in case your home is damaged.

However, for the larger, less frequently occurring hazards you may encounter, a bit more planning will be needed because they also have the potential to affect your entire community. It is for these events that you need to have supplies (i.e. food, water, medicine, etc.) and copies of your important papers. You will also need to consider where you will shelter out of the area, and if you have pets, whether they can shelter with you. It is also important to plan for a place to temporarily call home in the event that your home is destroyed and resources are limited in your community afterwards.

Prepare!

Before you realize it, you have written your plan. Now that you have identified what you will need to survive the hazards you have identified, take a look around your home. Ask yourself: "Do we already have the supplies we need?" Check your pantry, is there enough food for 3 days that does not need to be cooked? If you have food that needs to be cooked, do you have a gas or charcoal grill that you can use outside your home to cook with? As you go through your list of supplies, try to identify items that you can purchase in little amounts throughout the year in order to spread out the cost.

Pass It On!

You have a Plan. You have taken your inventory of supplies and are Preparing. Now you can Pass It On by sitting down with your family to talk through your Emergency Disaster Plan. Share the Plan for each type of hazard, the expected response, and where important documents, including the Plan, and supplies are located. Make sure to include any family or friends located out of the area, which have a role in your Plan, in the conversation. Encourage co-workers, friends and other family members to take a little time out of their day to write down their Emergency Disaster Plan. Review your employer's Emergency Disaster Plan to ensure you know what is expected of you during an emergency, and if it may affect your Family Emergency Disaster Plan.

Plan √ (done)

Prepare √ (done)

Pass It On √ (on-going)

Now What?

Enjoy everything that Southwest Florida has to offer each day, practice your Emergency Disaster Plan with your family at least once a year, and review your Emergency Disaster Plan at least once a year for any changes or additions. Then when there are events that are covered by your Plan, use it. When there are hazards that threaten your community, listen to your local Emergency Management Agency and activate your Family Emergency Disaster Plan accordingly.

Most Importantly: Evacuate when ordered to do so by your Local Emergency Management Agency. Also check with your local Emergency Management Agency for Family Emergency Disaster Plan assistance, and ask if they have a fill-in-the-blank template you can use to make it even easier to complete.

If you have a family member living in an Assisted Living Facility, or Nursing Home, it is important to know what the Facility's Emergency Plan covers. **Refer to page 11** for a list of questions you should be asking to ensure your family member's safety during an emergency.

Knowledge is not enough to protect you, your family and your home. You must put this information to work. Don't wait until the storm is nearly here, or it will be too late!

Prepare an All-Hazards Supply Kit

The first 72 hours is on you.

Get A Kit

Having a basic survival kit on-hand to sustain yourself and your family after an emergency is an essential part of preparation.

Think first about basic survival needs: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. Store your supplies in a portable container as close as possible to an exit and review the contents of your kit at least once a year.

Include in your kit:

- 3-7 day supply of water: 1 gallon per person per day but you may need more; consult with your doctor
- 3-day supply of non-perishable food that meets your dietary requirements
- Manual can opener or pop top cans/ containers and eating utensils
- Medical equipment and assistive devices
- Medications and a list of prescription name, dosage, frequency, and doctor contact information
- Cooler with an ice pack if medications need to be refrigerated
- Medical alert tags or bracelets to identify your disability-related need
- Supplies for a service animal or pets including 3-day supply of food and water, ID tags, proof of vaccinations, and Vet. contact information
- Flashlight

- Portable, battery-powered radio (preferably NOAA Weather Radio)
- Extra batteries
- Basic first aid kit and manual
- Warm clothing and blankets depending on the time of year
- Whistle
- Filter face masks (Dust Mask)
- List of emergency contact information
- Photocopies of important documents (birth certificate, license, insurances information, etc.)
- Cash and coins (cash dispensing machines may not work due to electricity or there is no cash available)
- Sanitation and hygiene items (hand sanitizer, denture care, moist towelettes, absorbent pads, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, etc.)
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper: 9 parts water to 1 part bleach can be used as a disinfectant, 16 drops of bleach to 1 gallon of water can be used to treat water in an emergency (do not use scented, color safe, or bleaches with added cleaners)

- Items for infants (formula, diapers, bottles, and pacifiers) if applicable

This supply kit is a good start, but depending on your situation, you may need more or less items to survive after an emergency. Another good idea is to use a suitcase with rollers to make it easier on yourself and your family.

Also if you don't feel like shopping for these items separately, you can purchase them online or at stores in your area.

Finally, you do need to understand that emergency responders may not be able to get to you right away and having a kit will help you between the period of time you are rescued after a disaster.

Hopefully you will not have to ever use the kit, but are you willing to take this risk?

Preparing Your Boat for a Hurricane

Precautions for Boat Owners

The key to protecting your boat from hurricanes or any severe, threatening weather is planning, preparation, and timely action. The following precautions and checklists are meant as guidelines only.

Each boat owner needs a plan unique to the type of boat, local boating environment, the severe weather conditions likely to occur in that region, and the characteristics of safe havens and/or plans for protection. Listen to your local Emergency Management office for specific evacuations related to boats.

Do Not Stay Aboard.

Winds during any hurricane can exceed 100 mph, and tornados are often associated with these storms. First and foremost, protect human life.

1. Prior to the hurricane season, develop a detailed plan of action to secure your vessel in the marina. If permitted, remove your boat from the threatened area, or take your boat to a previously identified hurricane refuge. Before hurricane season, practice your plan to ensure that it works.
2. Arrange for a friend to carry out your plans if you are out of town during hurricane season.
3. Check your lease or storage rental agreement with the marina or storage area. Know your responsibilities and liabilities as well as those of the marina.
4. Consolidate all records, including insurance policies, a recent photo of your vessel, boat lease agreement with the marina or storage area, and telephone numbers of appropriate authorities (i.e., harbor master, Coast Guard, insurance agent, etc.) and keep them in your possession.
5. Maintain an inventory of both the items removed and those left on board. Items of value should be marked so that they can be readily identified, if dispersed by the storm.
6. When a hurricane is approaching, and after you have made anchoring or mooring provisions, remove all moveable equipment such as canvas, sails, dinghies, radios, cushions, Biminis and roller furling sails. Lash down everything you cannot remove such as tillers, wheels, booms, etc. Make sure the electrical system is cut off unless you plan to leave the boat in the water, and remove the battery to eliminate the risk of fire or other damage.

Trailerable Boats

1. Be sure your tow vehicle is capable of properly and adequately moving the boat. Check your trailer: tires, bearings and axle should all be in good condition.
2. Once at a "safe" place, lash your boat to the trailer and place blocks between the frame members and the axle inside each wheel. Owners of light weight boats, after consulting with the manufacturer, may wish to consider letting about half the air out of the tires, then filling the boat one-third full of water to help hold it down. (The blocks will prevent damage to the springs from the additional weight of the water.)
3. Secure your boat with heavy lines to fixed objects. Try to pick a location that allows you to secure it from all four directions, because hurricane winds rotate and change direction. It can be tied down to screw anchors secured into the ground. Remember that trees are often blown over during a hurricane.

Non-Trailerable Boats in Dry Storage

When selecting a "safe" location, be sure to consider whether storm surge could rise into the area. Never leave a boat on davits or on a hydro-lift.

Non-Trailerable Boats in Wet Storage

The owner of a large boat, usually one moored in a berth, has three options:

1. Secure the boat in the marina berth.
2. Moor the boat in a previously identified safe area.
3. Haul the boat

Each action requires a separate strategy. Another alternative, running from the storm, is not encouraged except for large commercial vessels—unless there is enough time to get your boat beyond the storm's projected path.

Boats Remaining in Marina Berth

1. Double all lines. Rig crossing spring lines fore and aft. Attach lines high on pilings to allow for tidal rise or surge. Make sure lines will not slip off pilings. Inspect pilings and choose those that seem strongest and tallest and are properly installed. The longer the dock lines, the better a boat will be at coping with high tides. It is also essential to double up on all lines and use chafe protectors at any potential chafe points.
2. Install fenders to protect the boat from rubbing against the pier, pilings and other boats. Cover all lines at rough points to prevent chafing. Wrap with tape, rags, and rubber hoses, etc.
3. Assess the attachment of primary cleats, winches and chocks. These should have substantial back plates and adequate stainless steel bolt sizes.
4. Batteries should be fully charged and checked to ensure their capability to run automatic bilge pumps for the duration of the storm. Consider backup batteries. Cut off all devices consuming electricity except bilge pumps.

Boat pileup after Hurricane Ivan.

Local Shelter Issues

Shelter Space

There is a substantial shelter space deficit throughout SW Florida. So, if you have a safe place to go, plan to use that location instead of a Public Shelter. But, if you have no safe place to go, shelters will be open. Here are some important points to remember if you choose to go to a public shelter:

When you arrive, give your name and address to the shelter manager so you can be located, if necessary. If you leave the shelter, check out with the shelter manager. Accountability is important for your safety.

Shelters are not able to provide any conveniences or luxuries. They are not hotels! Food and water will be available, but there may be a slight delay in initial service. If you want or need special food items, bring them with you! Bring your family's disaster survival kit to ensure proper provisions. Below are some items you should consider bringing when going to a shelter:

- Drinking water (initially)
- Snacks or special foods
- Lawn chair or bed roll
- Book or electronic entertainment item with headphones
- Change of clothing

Remember weapons and alcoholic beverages are not permitted. The only animals allowed are service animals. Your county may have pet friendly shelters. Contact your local Animal Services Division for their location.

People with Special Needs

Some people have medical issues that cannot be accommodated in a regular public shelter. For those people whose health would quickly and dramatically deteriorate in a public shelter and have no other safe place to go, there are Special Care shelters available. You must complete an application to see if your medical issues qualify for a Special Care shelter. There are specific criteria and requirements to be eligible for the Special Care shelter, which may vary somewhat from county to county. You must have a caregiver with you during your stay at the Special Care shelter. During an emergency we have very limited staff working in the shelters, so your caregiver is critically important for your health and safety.

There is limited hospital sheltering for people who are extremely high risk and cannot survive outside a hospital environment. Your physician must recommend hospital sheltering and give specific details of your medical situation. You may be responsible for fees associated with hospital sheltering. As at any other shelter, you must bring your emergency supplies with you. In any emergency situation you should have a plan for where you will go if you cannot return to your home because of damage. Your local Emergency Management office can help you register and answer any questions.

A stay at a public shelter may become a necessity during or after a storm.

People with Disabilities

Estimates vary, but as many as one in four people live with some type of disability. Sometimes signs are obvious, a wheelchair, a guide dog or a cane. However, many times a disability is not obvious. Whether obvious or not, awareness and sensitivity toward persons with disabilities makes good sense.

Practicing disability etiquette is an easy way to help people with disabilities feel more welcome and comfortable. Here are a few things anyone can do to make a person with a disability feel more at ease in any situation. Remember, a person with a disability is a person first. Ask before you help. Don't assume a person with a disability needs your help with a task. If you are asked for help, be sure to ask what kind of assistance is needed. Be sensitive regarding personal space and physical contact. Respect personal space and remember that people often consider their equipment part of their person. Think before you speak. Speak to the person, not their aide or companion. Converse with a person with a disability as you would any other person. Get permission from a parent or guardian before interacting with children.

People with disabilities must assume personal responsibility and be prepared for an emergency. The basic steps of a personal safety plan are the same for everyone. Where will you go? How will you get there? What will you take? How much time will you need? How will you communicate with those who need to know? With minor modifications, the information in this Guide is applicable to everyone. You must take responsibility for yourself in an emergency. Part of any plan is to identify and use all avail¬able resources. If you need help or have questions, contact your local Emergency Management agency. There are people and tools to help you become better prepared.

Protect your Pets

In a hurricane, pets are subject to the same hazards as we are and have many of the same needs. Remember, Public Shelters do not permit pets! The best plan is to identify a safer location that allows pets (e.g. a friend's home or hotel). That way, you can keep your pets with you when you evacuate. Check the Internet to help locate hotels that accept pets. You should also have a supply kit for your pets. Include non-perishable food, water and medications. Keep a sturdy cage or carrier to comfortably hold your pet and/or a collar and leash. Make sure all vaccinations are up-to-date and keep a copy of the records. Also keep several good photos to help identify your pet should you become separated. Place identification on your pet's collar or consider using a microchip to identify your pet. Consult your veterinarian for more details.

ITEMS TO REMEMBER:

- Never leave your pet(s) outside during a storm
- Never leave a cat with a dog, even if the two are friends
- Confine and keep small pets (birds, hamsters, etc.) away from cats and dogs
- Dangerous animals should be secured in special crates or cages
- Any animals posing a danger will be at risk of being destroyed

All animal facilities in the path of a hurricane are subject to some degree of damage or flooding. Keep in mind, boarding kennels may be without electricity or potable water and have limited personnel and supplies for days to weeks following a disaster. For more information, contact the Emergency Management Office in your County.

Utility Tips

WATER

Locate the emergency water shut-off valve for your residence and remove any shrubbery or obstructions. Test the water shut-off valve to be sure that it is operational. If the shut-off valve is not operational, have it repaired or replaced.

Turn the emergency water shut¬off valve to the off position if you are leaving your residence prior to a storm. This will help minimize damage to the interior of your home should a pipe burst inside.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on turning off your hot water heater and unplug it. Some hot water heaters may be damaged if the water supply is turned off for n extended period of time. Locate your sewer clean-out lid and remove any shrubbery or obstructions in case the clean-out needs to be accessed. Due to power outages, water treatment plants will be operating under limited conditions. Water pressures will be reduced!

Because of reduced pressures and the limited operations of lift stations, **WATER CONSERVATION IS A MUST!** Just because power has been restored to your home, does not mean that power has been restored to all lift stations or water and wastewater treatment plants.

- Turn off all sprinklers.
- Remember to reset your irrigation timer once power has been restored.
- Abstain from running dishwashers and clothes washers.
- Limit the amount of water used during a shower or the amount to fill the bathtub.
- Limit the amount of toilet flushing.
- Abstain from any other outdoor use of water that is not absolutely necessary.

ELECTRICITY

A strong storm or hurricane can cause significant damage, resulting in widespread power outages. Restoration efforts must be prioritized, starting with facilities that provide the most critical services:

- Damaged power plants and power lines from the plants, since these must be fixed before service can be restored anywhere.
- Organizations that provide critical infrastructure functions to the community, such as hospitals, police, and fire stations.
- Major power lines that serve large numbers of customers.
- Smaller power lines such as service to a single street.
- Individual homes or businesses still without power.

KEEPING SAFE DURING A POWER OUTAGE

When a power outage occurs, safety is a very important concern. Here are some basic tips that will keep you, your family and your employees safe while the power is out:

- Assume all cables and wires are energized and stay away.
- Keep away from flooded and debris-laden areas because they may be hiding downed lines.
- Run your portable generator outside your house or building, and connect appliances or equipment directly to it.
- If you leave your home, turn off appliances that may have been on when the power went out, or turn off your main breaker.
- Avoid driving in damaged areas. You might interfere with rescue or restoration efforts, as well as jeopardize your own safety.

Help keep telephone lines clear for emergency calls. Only call to report downed power lines, or if your neighbors' power has been restored and you are without electricity. Don't trim trees or remove debris located near downed power lines. If you must remove debris from your home, don't pile it under or near electrical lines or equipment.

Any damage to your home's electric system must be repaired by a licensed electrician and inspected by a designated agency before power can be restored.

Check your weather-head (located on the roof where your service connects to the pole) and your meter box to make sure they are not damaged.

If you suspect there is water in the walls or ceiling, stay away from electrical outlets and contact a licensed electrician to repair the damage.

If you need to live in temporary quarters on your property, a licensed electrician can install a temporary service pole. After the pole is inspected by a designated agency, your electric utility can provide power.

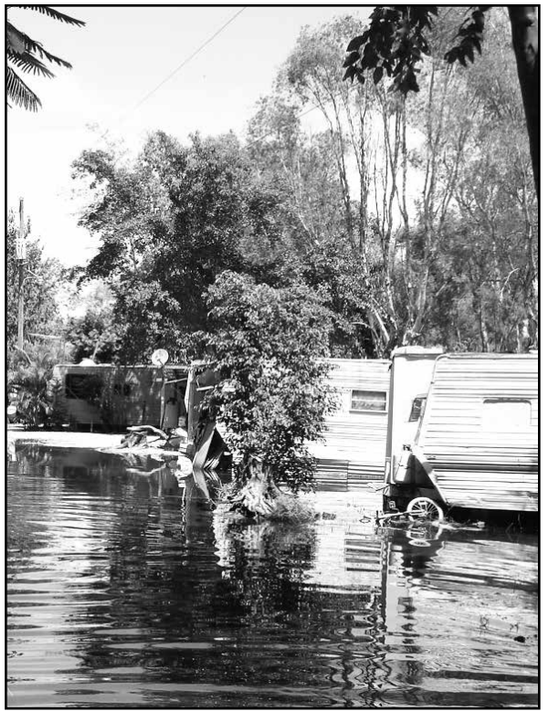
For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county.

After The Storm

After major storms our lives can change drastically. These disasters affect everyone to some extent. Relief supplies and other aid will be arriving as quickly as possible, but it may take several days. Try to remain calm, patient and under-standing. Your attitude affects you and everyone around you. Remember that the longest and hardest part of dealing with a hurricane is the recovery.

There may be residual flooding and roads may be blocked for days or weeks, making damaged areas inaccessible. This may mean that you will not be allowed back to your home for days, or possibly weeks. Emergency workers want your return home to be as safe as possible and need time to clear safe access and secure hazards. Listen to local media for re-entry information and do not go into unsafe areas. Drive only if absolutely necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges. Do not go sightseeing.

If you evacuated out of the area, consider staying away for a few extra days. Before you decide to return, consider the following.



Power will be out for an undetermined period of time. This means no air conditioning, no lights, no refrigeration, no water pump and in many cases no stove.

Telephone service will be out or limited. This includes 911 calling. Lack of power and damaged facilities will affect both landline telephones and cellular telephone service. Even if your phone works, use it only for emergencies.

Municipal water supplies may be unsafe to drink without boiling or chemical treatment. Treat all water as unsafe until you are notified that it is safe.

Sewer lift stations will not work, meaning toilets will not flush and sinks not drain, and they may backup into your home or property. When you do return, some damage may not be readily apparent, so here are some things to keep in mind for your safety.

Inspect your home for damage. Check for water and sewer line damage. Check the electrical system. Turn off the main breaker until you are sure the system is safe. Check for natural gas and/or bottled gas leaks. Do not enter or stay in a structure if you smell gas.

Be careful when you go outside and pay attention to where you walk and stand. Avoid any downed wires or standing water. Report downed wires to your utility company or to emergency services.

Check above you for low hanging objects or loose things that could fall.

Beware of wild animals that might be dangerous. Fire ants, bees, wasps, snakes, rodents and wild animals will be seeking high ground. They can create health and safety hazards.

Be careful of domestic animals, even ones you know. They may be frightened or injured and more dangerous than you expect.

Do not connect generators to your house wiring! Service personnel can be killed, or fires

started elsewhere. Use your generator only in a well-ventilated area and shut it down during refueling.

REMEMBER: Insurance companies will send special disaster assistance teams, as will the State and Federal governments. Still, it may be more than a week before those teams are able to get into operation.

Take pictures of the damage, both to the house and its contents for insurance claims.

Have all your insurance documents ready and be patient!

When help does arrive, some may be in the form of the unscrupulous fortune seekers. Do not sign repair contracts until you have checked out the contractor. Do not pay for any services until the work has been completed.

Ask for a valid county contractor's license. Is the contractor bonded? Does the price seem fair? Are high-pressure tactics being used? Report the suspicious contractor to authorities to be checked out! If you see unfairly high prices being charged, report it! Local authorities want to help our residents by requiring competence and fairness.

For more information

Contact the Emergency Management Office in your county.

Generator Use and Safety Precautions

When the power goes off, many residents turn to emergency generators to power refrigerators, freezers, lights, fans and other appliances. If you use a generator, extreme caution is required. While convenient and useful, generators can create hazards for homeowners and electric utility workers. Always read and follow the manufacturer's safety and operating instructions.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a color¬less, odorless and tasteless poison gas. It is a component of the exhaust from the generator engine. The symptoms of exposure are subtle, but deadly. Never run your generator inside your home or garage on in any other enclosed space. Inexpensive CO detectors, similar to smoke alarms, are readily available and recommended as an added safety precaution.

To avoid Carbon Monoxide poisoning, never use a generator indoors or in attached garages. Only operate the generator outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area away from air intakes to the home.

To avoid electrocution, plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy duty, outdoor rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load. Do not operate more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator. This will overload and damage the generator and possibly create a fire hazard.

If a generator is connected to the house wiring, the home must have a transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. A transfer switch connects your house to the generator and disconnects it from the utility power. This prevents back feeding, or energizing circuits outside your home. Back feeding most commonly occurs when a generator is connected directly to the electric panel or circuit in a home. Feeding power back into the utility system during an outage will energize the transformer serving the house and could pose a serious threat to crews working to restore power in the area who may not know they are working with an energized line.

Do not store fuel indoors or try to refuel a generator while it's running. Gasoline (and other flammable liquids) should be stored outside of living areas in properly labeled, non-glass, safety containers. They should not be stored in a garage if a fuel-burning appliance is in the garage. The vapor from gasoline can travel invisibly along the ground and be ignited by pilot lights or electric arcs caused by turning on the lights. Avoid spilling fuel on hot components. Put out all flames or cigarettes when handling gasoline. Always have a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher located near the generator. Never attempt to refuel a portable generator while it is running.

Item	Running Wattage	Starting Wattage	Item	Running Wattage	Starting Wattage
Dishwasher, Hot Dry	1450	1400	Garage Door Opener ½ hp	725	1400
Coffee Maker	1750	0	Hair Dryers	300-1200	0
Electric Fry Pan	1300	0	Lights	As indicated on bulb	
Refrigerator or Freezer	700	2200			
Dehumidifier	650	800	Radio	50 to 200	0
Clothes Dryer Electric	5750	1800	Well Pump – 1/3 hp	800	1300
Toaster 4 slice	1650	0	1/2 hp	1400	2100
Automatic Washer	1150	2300	Sump Pump – 1/3 hp	800	1300
Microwave Oven 625 watts	625	800	1/2 hp	1050	2150
Electric Range 6-inch Element	1500		Television, Color	300	0
Iron	1200	0	Vacuum Cleaner	800	0
Computer	720	720	Air Conditioner 10,000 BTU	1500	2200
Water Heater	4500	4500	20,000 BTU	2500	3300
Fan 1/8 hp	400	600	24,000 BTU	3800	4950
Fan 1/4 hp	650	1200	32,000 BTU	5000	6500
Fan 1/2 hp	1100	2400	40,000 BTU	6000	7800

Storm Debris Cleanup

When your County has been included in a Disaster Declaration

Hurricanes can inundate Southwest Florida with millions of tons of debris, including normal household garbage, household chemical waste, appliances, construction/demolition, and yard debris. Segregating this debris is critical in assisting in the recovery efforts for your community.

To help ensure that debris is collected in the most efficient, safe, and timely manner, we recommend that you follow these simple guidelines when clearing debris from your property after the next big storm hits.

Normal Household Garbage

is defined as:

Materials and perishable items that would be placed out for collection in your weekly trash container. These include your everyday household trash items. Normal household recyclables are defined as materials which are capable of being recycled, including newspapers, card-board, plastic containers labeled #1 through #7 and containers made of glass, steel and aluminum. The following are not considered normal household garbage.

Yard Debris (Yard Trash) is defined as: Vegetative matter including shrubs, palm fronds, tree trimmings, grass clippings, bushes, leaves, twigs or cut up tree branches.

Construction/Demolition Debris (C&D) is defined as: Materials directly relating to construction or demolition of buildings, such as cement, glass, dry-wall, insulation, concrete block, etc.

White Goods are defined as large discarded appliances, including refrigerators, ranges, washing machines, clothes dryers, water heaters, freezers, microwave ovens, and air conditioners. All items must be empty of all contents.

DO NOT MIX ANY OF THE ABOVE MATERIALS – There will be separate collections for each material and they will be picked up according to priority in the immediate aftermath of the storm.

FIRST PRIORITY

Normal Household Garbage

Place in your regular collection cart container or in heavy duty plastic bags, and place where you would normally locate it for your regular weekly collection.

SECOND PRIORITY—Yard Debris

Small quantities should be prepared as for weekly collection, in containers, bags or bundles of less than 50 pounds. Prepare all yard debris in accordance with local collection policies and procedures.

Large quantities of storm related yard debris should be placed alongside the curb, with trees and branches prepared into easily manageable lengths. Do not place near low hanging objects or around mail boxes, water meters or fire hydrants. Large quantities of storm related yard debris may be collected using a mechanical grab that will require room to operate.

Only yard debris directly generated from the storm event will be collected. Land clearing and landscape improvement activities are not eligible for collection. Debris from these activities will require removal and disposal to be arranged by the property owner at their expense.

There will be no collection of large quantities of yard debris on private roads or in gated communities unless properties in these locations are included in a FEMA declaration or where an immediate threat to health and safety exists.

THIRD PRIORITY

Construction Debris, Recyclables, White Goods, Bulk Items, Electronic Equipment, Tires and Lead Acid Batteries

You will be notified through media when collection of these items will take place. Disposal rules for small quantities of C&D materials vary by location so look for media notices for specific guidance as to how best to dispose of these materials in your respective areas.

Small quantities of C&D:

In many areas, small quantities of C&D materials (less than 2 cubic yards) may be allowed to be placed at the curb alongside of normal household garbage. These materials would generally be containerized and/or bundled, weighing less than 50 pounds each and not exceeding 6 feet in length. These materials may be collected with the normal household garbage provided that the materials are appropriate with your local collection policies.

White goods:

Refrigerators, freezers and other appliances MUST be emptied of their contents prior to collection. Refrigerators and or freezers containing food waste or other rotting wastes will not be collected.

STORM DEBRIS INFORMATION

As the storm approaches and in the immediate aftermath, look out for special notices in the local newspapers, special bulletins on your local government website, local radio and television channels, and other communications media.

During the first 72 hours after the storm has passed, FEMA, Solid Waste Management and the Sheriff's Office will be assessing the damage and road conditions to determine when collections can resume.

Picking Up The Pieces

WATER PRECAUTIONS

After a natural disaster, damaged water pipes can cause pressure to drop, possibly letting in contaminated ground water. The concern with the water is bacterial contamination. The most common offenders, shigella and salmonella, can cause severe diarrhea. If not treated with antibiotics, these diseases can lead to life threatening dehy-dration. Here are some answers and tips for coping with water problems.

Disinfect tap water you use for anything, including for your pets. Boil it for at least ten minutes, or use chem-icals: eight drops of chlorine bleach (without scent or other additives) or tincture of iodine per gallon. Let the water sit at least 10 minutes before drinking.

If you wash dishes in tap water, rinse them in extra-chlorinated water. Use about 15 drops of chlorine on the dishes to keep them clean until next use.

Showering or bathing in tap water is fine. If you cut yourself shaving, apply a disinfectant such as alcohol or antibiotic cream.

FOOD SAFETY RULES

Without refrigeration, items such as fresh milk, custards and creamed foods, cream cheese, cheese spread and cottage cheese, hamburger, pork, fish and poultry spoil rapidly and should be discarded if they have been without cooling for several hours. Don't trust your sense of smell.

Clean out the refrigerator if power has been off for more than two days. Throw away perishables. Wipe the in-terior with baking soda and water.

Fill your freezer with plastic jugs of water. A full freezer stays cold longer.

Keep the freezer door closed as much as possible. Foods will stay frozen longer.

Meats and solid items stay frozen longer than baked goods.

Refreezing partially thawed food is risky. Generally, if the foods still contain ice crystals, they're OK to re-freeze although their quality may suffer.

Dry ice keeps food frozen for approximately 1 to 4 days.

Without air conditioning, food waste will start to smell rapidly. Use small plastic garbage bags; tie or seal and place in a larger bag or can outdoors.

MAKESHIFT KITCHEN AND POWER SUBSTITUTES

A garage, carport or roofed patio would be an ideal spot for a temporary kitchen. This is what you'll need:

- A surface to prepare food. A small table or improvised table.
- A large cooler and bags of ice to keep food fresh. Buy only the amount of fresh food your family can consume in one meal. Rely on canned foods for safety's sake.
- Use a charcoal or propane grill or a camp stove for cooking. Do not bring these grills inside; a fire could start or fumes could generate.
- Use kitchen cabinets or sturdy boxes for storage.
- For lighting use fuel-based lanterns or candles.

CLOTHING AND FURNITURE PRESERVATION

- Take down wet draperies and spread to dry
- Take furniture outside to dry, but don't put in the sun. Put under a covered patio or tarp.
- Elevate wet upholstered furniture if it is resting on carpet.
- Hang comforters and blankets out to dry
- Dry pillows outdoors, but not in direct sunlight

10 Questions to Ask if Your Family Member Resides in an Assisted Living Facility, or Nursing Home

1. Does the facility have a currently approved Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan? If yes, may I see a copy of the approval letter? If no, ask them why, as it is required.
2. Do you maintain a minimum 72-hour supply of food, water, medications, etc. for each resident?
3. Do you have an emergency generator? If yes, to what does it supply power during a blackout?
4. Under what circumstances would my family member be evacuated?
5. Can my family member be released to me for the purpose of evacuation?
6. Who will notify me of the impending evacuation of my family member?
7. Whom should I call to receive current information on my family member?
8. What facilities might my family member be evacuated to? Where are they located?
9. Who will notify me that my family member is returning to this facility?
10. If my family member evacuates with me, who do I contact to determine when the facility is open and operating?

Roof Repair Tips

While waiting for licensed

Contractors, there are two temporary remedies for leaks you can use. Before climbing onto the roof of your home, know this: It is easy to slip, particularly on wet tile and there is danger from tree branches, power lines and ladders.

Repairs are made from the outside. On the inside, set up buckets under leaky areas to relieve the water pressure. On the outside of the roof, you can use plastic sheeting or tar paper. The smallest holes may be patched by using a trowel to spread roofing cement over them.

Plastic Sheeting

This is the most temporary measure. Take heavy plastic sheets — a brand name is Visqueen — and use roofing nails to fasten them around the hole. If you can find 2 X 4's, square off the hole with the wood first. Then wrap the plastic around the wood and nail down the wood.

If you can't get wood or nails, use bricks, cement blocks or sandbags to hold down the plastic.

Roofing Paper

This is known as tar paper or roofing felt. Find it in the building materials sections of stores. It is applied with trowel-grade roofing cement and a trowel. The paper generally is sold in rolls by weight (15, 30 and 90 weight paper are common) per 100 square feet.

The paper is best applied in overlapping layers - alternating the cement and paper — from the bottom of the roof upward.

Contractor Tips

The National Roofing Contractors Association can help you find reputable roofing contractors. The Web site is www.nrca.net.

The NRCA offers these tips:

Check for a permanent place of business, telephone number, tax identification number and occupational license. A professional will have these readily available.

Check for a company with a good track record. Ask the contractor for proof of insurance. Insist on seeing copies of both liability coverage and workers' compensation certificates.

Find out if the contractor is bonded and licensed.

Be sure the contractor can provide a manufacturer's warranty. Beware of unrealistic, long-term warranties.

Ask for a list of references and completed projects. Check with past customers to see if they were satisfied with the materials and workmanship.

Call the Department of Business and Professional Regulation to check for complaints against a contractor. The DPR can be reached at (850) 487-1395.

Insist on a written proposal and examine it carefully before signing or paying any money.

Spotting Roof Problems

Resist the urge to get up on a ladder to take a closer look at your damaged roof. Leave that to a professional. Here's some inspection advice.

From the Ground

If you need a closer look, use binoculars. Look for torn or missing shingles and problems in the valleys where two sloping sections join at an angle. Because water flows heavily in the valleys, they are especially vulnerable.

A Closer Look

If you can't see from a distance, wear non-slip, rubber soled shoes and use a firmly braced or tied-off ladder equipped with rubber safety feet.

Don't Walk on the Roof

You could dislodge the protective surface granules, diminishing waterproofing effectiveness. You also could fall off or through a weak, damaged roof. If you find large accumulations of shingle surface granules in the gutters, it doesn't necessarily mean the roof needs to be replaced. A contractor should inspect the roof, however.

Tile roofs should be checked for cracked, missing or loose pieces of roofing material. For asphalt or wood-shingle roofs, look for protruding nails. On flat roofs, look for bare spots in the gravel surface and check for standing water.

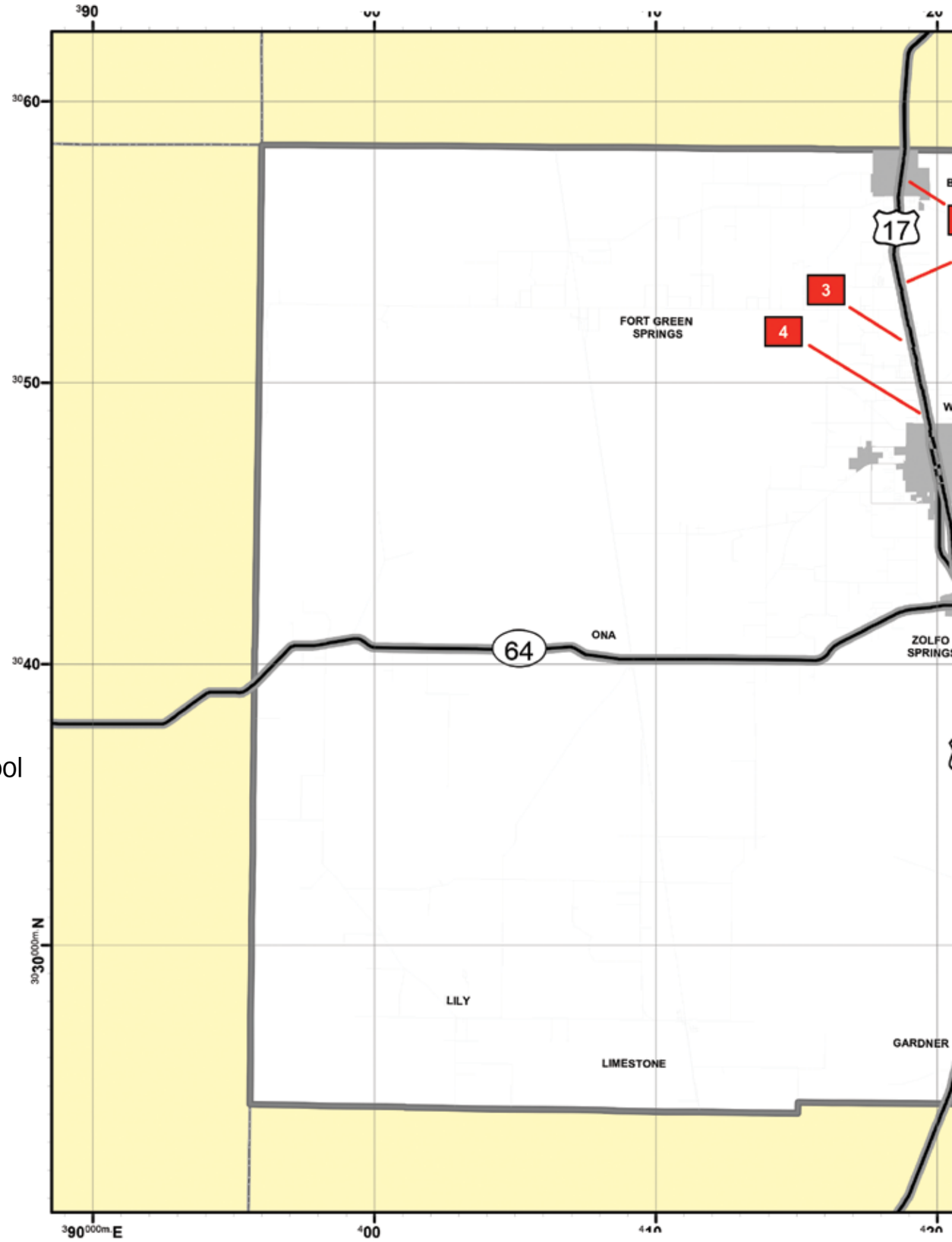
Take a close look at the flashing on chimneys, vents, skylights, wall/roof junctions and other areas where the integrity of the roof may be compromised.

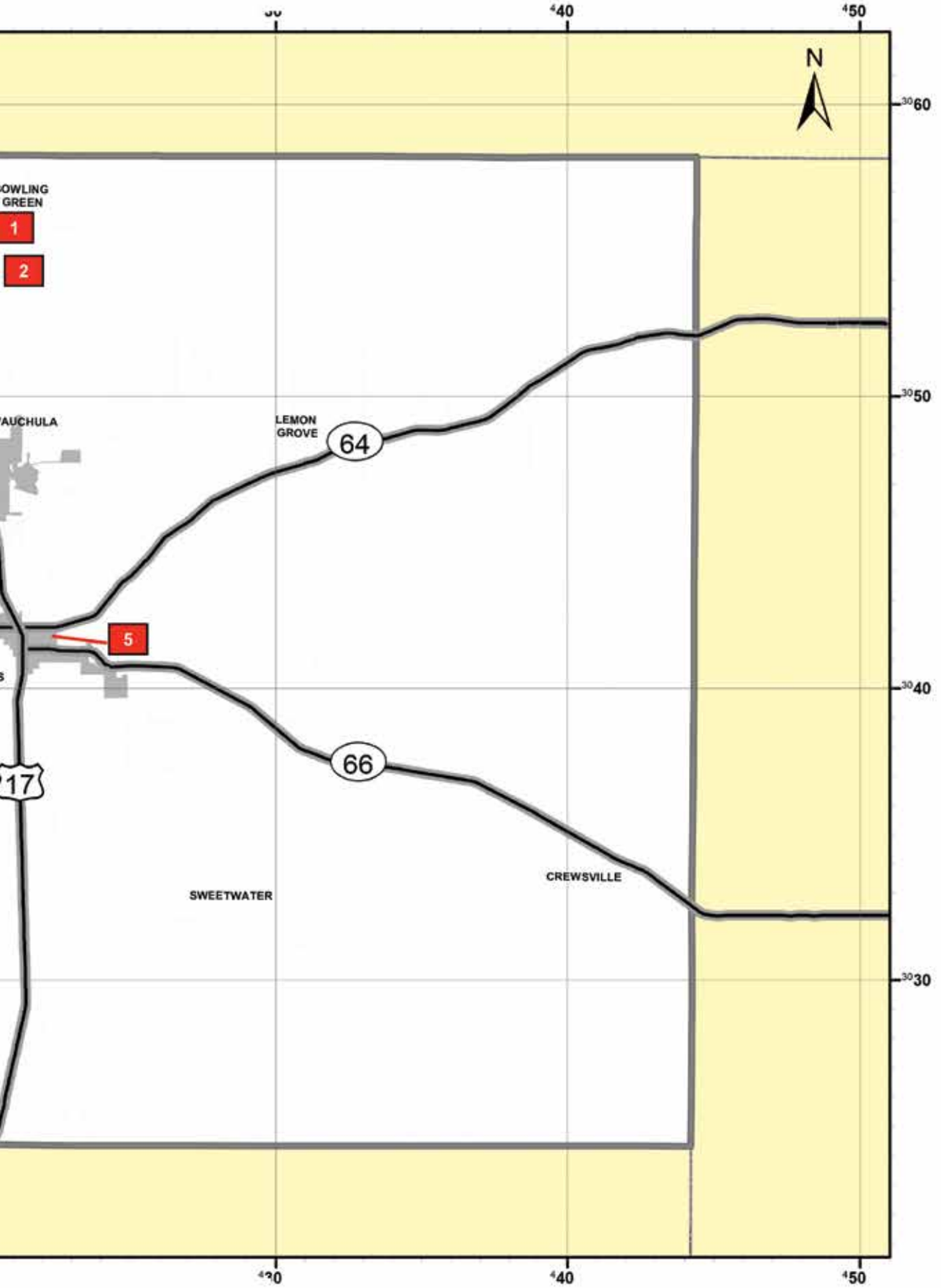
Check television antennas and other add-ons to see if there are leaks that are a result of improper sealing of openings made in the roof.

Hardee County Shelter and Evacuation Information

HARDEE COUNTY SHELTER LIST

1. Bowling Green Elementary School
   4530 Church Avenue
   Bowling Green, Florida 33834
   PH: (863) 375-2288
2. South Florida State College (Special Needs)
   2968 U.S. Highway 17 North
   Bowling Green, Florida 33873
3. Hardee Junior High School/ Hilltop Elementary
   2401 U.S. Highway 17 North
   Wauchula, Florida. 33873
   PH: (863) 773-2750
4. North Wauchula Elementary School
   1120 North Florida Avenue
   Wauchula, Florida 33873
   PH: (863) 773-2183
5. Zolfo Springs Elementary School
   3215 Schoolhouse Road
   Zolfo Springs, Florida 33890
   (863) 735-1221

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OWLING
GREEN
1
2
AUCHULA
LEMON
GROVE
64
5
66
17
SWEETWATER
CREWSVILLE
40
50
60
50
40
30
30
40
50

How well will your home withstand hurricane force winds?

Storm Ready Assessment

When was your home built? **(Circle One)**

- Prior to 1980 0
- 1980-1994 4
- 1995-2002 6
- 2003 or newer 10

Where is your home or business located?

- On a barrier island 1
- Less than 5 miles from the coast 2
- Between 5 & 20 miles from the coast 3
- More than 20 miles from the coast 4

Select number of stories:

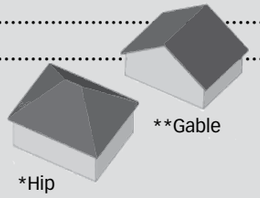
- One story 4
- Two or more stories 2

Select roof deck type:

- Plywood/OSB 3
- Dimensional Lumber 2
- Concrete 4

Select roof shape:

- Hip* 6
- Gable** 1
- Other 3



Type of Roof-Wall Connection: **(Circle One)**

- Single/Double Wraps 6
- Slips 4
- Toe Nails 2
- Unknown 1

Type of Roof Cover:

- Metal Panel 3
- Shingle 2
- Tile 4
- Unknown 1

Is your structure CBS or wood frame?

- CBS/Concrete 10
- Wood Frame 5
- Combination of above 8

Openings currently protected:

- Some openings 10
- All openings 20
- No openings 0

Type of opening protection:

- Hurricane (meets Florida building code) 30
- Ordinary (does NOT meet Florida building code) 20
- None 0

Is your structure mobile or conventional?

- Mobile 1
- Conventional 2

Add up all of the circled values above and record the total score in the space provided below.

Total Score: _____

Explanation of Score Results:

Above 85:

Means you have done well to protect your home and family from the threat of hurricane force winds

Between 75 and 85++ :

There is an opportunity to improve the chances of your home surviving hurricane force winds

Between 60 and 75++ :

Indicates you need to take action to protect your home from high winds and flying debris

Less than 60++ :

Suggests the envelope of your home is vulnerable and might fail to withstand hurricane force winds.

++ If you would like more information on building codes or types of hurricane protection products, call **Storm Smart** at 1 (888) 962-7283 or visit: www.stormsmart.com.

Important Information for Manufactured and Mobile Home Residents

Safety is the most important part of storm preparedness. Please remember that no matter how good your tie-downs are or how complete your insurance coverage is, EVACUATION is the best plan to save your life!

Before the Storm, Secure Your Home

Anchors REQUIRED: Mobile homes should ALWAYS be tied down. In fact, Florida law requires manufactured home owners to secure their homes using anchors and tie-downs.

Homes without proper tie-downs are more vulnerable to high winds. Taking proper precautions now will ensure that your mobile home is properly secured, reducing possible damage to your home and your neighbor's property. Tie-downs should be checked at least once per year.

Windstorm Insurance:

Florida law PROHIBITS the sale of windstorm insurance on manufactured homes not anchored in accordance with Florida law.

Remember: Damage caused by flooding is NOT covered by most homeowner's policies. You may need flood insurance even if you do not live in a flood zone. The Nation¬al Flood Insurance Program makes flood insurance available for manufactured homes on foundations. See your insurance broker for details.

Contractor's License:

Florida law requires tie-down installers to be licensed by the State. To verify a contractor's license, call the Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, Manufactured Housing Section of Division of Motorist Services.

Inspections: Have your tie-downs inspected by an installer. Most installers will inspect your home and provide a free estimate. Get estimates from three installers and ask them to explain the installation.

Installation Rules:

Tie-down installation requirements are set forth in Florida Administration Code 15C-1. Ask your installer about the requirements of that Code. For detailed information contact the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Bureau of Mobile Home and Recreational Vehicle Construction at (850) 617-3004.

Time & Cost:

A typical tie-down installation costs less than $2,000 and takes less than a day.

Alternative Anchoring Systems:

When a contractor inspects for tie-downs, ask if there are dependable, State approved anchoring systems available for your home.

Other structures:

Also ask about recommended methods to secure storage/ utility sheds, carports, and other vulnerable structures.

Group Estimates:

Most contractors provide dis-counts for group installations. Meet with your neighbors to plan a group inspection and/or installation.

Utilities:

Learn how and when to turn off gas, water, & electricity.

Safety Tips

- Check for loose straps.
- Make sure straps are properly aligned and not on an angle.
- Check to be sure the proper number of tie-downs have been installed.
- Verify that ground anchors and stabilizer plates have been installed properly.
- Be sure support piers are in con¬tact with the frame.
- Replace straps or ground anchors that show signs of corrosion or damage.

For additional protection, you may want to consider installing a longitudinal tie-down system located at the front and rear of your home.

Develop an Evacuation Plan

Host Homes:

Emergency management agencies recommend you arrange a "Host Home" outside the evacuation zone. A Host Home is the home of a friend or family member who has agreed to provide temporary shelter for you and your family.

Communication Plan:

Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

Public Shelters:

Public Emergency Shelters should be your LAST RESORT in an evacuation. You will have no privacy, limited space, and meal service may be delayed. Your temporary "home" will be a gymnasium floor or public hallway, and local officials must give you permission to leave! If you MUST use a public shelter, identify two shelters nearby, preferably in different directions from your home.

Evacuation Routes:

See the enclosed map for evacuation routes. Be prepared to drive 20 to 50 miles to reach a safe place.

Insurance

Most property owners have Homeowners Insurance coverage insuring them from catastrophic loss. However a Homeowners policy does not protect you from loss in flooding or rising water.

To insure your home from Flood (rising water) you must have a separate Flood Insurance policy. Our county qualifies and participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. We qualify by making building requirements stringent and in accordance with the Florida Building Code and local flood damage prevention ordinances.

If you don't have a Flood Insurance policy, check with your insurance agent for a price quote on your home and your personal property. Don't wait until the hurricane warning has been issued. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance becomes effective, unless you are purchasing a new home with a mortgage. Additional information can be obtained from your county Emergency Management office.

BEFORE THE STORM

Make Sure That You Know Your Coverage

You may have made some improvements that have increased the value of your home. Make sure that you review your insurance policy carefully with your agent and know your coverage limits as well as your deductibles. Consider changing your coverage, if it is not adequate.

Check your policy for Flood and Windstorm Coverage

Remember a homeowner's policy does not cover flood damage caused by ris¬ing water. If you live in a flood prone, or designated flood zone area, you should talk to your representtative to obtain flood insurance.

Homeowners policies usually cover wind¬storm damage caused directly from the wind, wind driven water or hail policy. If you have any questions about whether your policy covers windstorm damage, contact your insurance agent or your insurance company. Your Agent or your insurance company can assist you in making changes and determining what the cost of those changes would be.

Know What Your Current Policy Does and Does Not Cover

Standard homeowner policies usually limit coverage on items such as valuable jewelry, art, antiques, and money. You may need additional coverage for these items.

If you have an older home, you will need coverage for "Law and Ordinance". This will cover all of the code changes that may have occurred since your home was built.

Most homeowners' policies do not cover backup of septic tanks, wells or sewers into your home unless you have added a "rider" to your policy covering this type of loss.

Update Your List of Personal Belongings

Make an itemized list of your personal property, their cost, dates of purchase, and serial numbers, if appropriate. Your insurance company will probably require proof of the cost of any item for which a claim is made. Photographs and/or videotapes are also good ideas that you may wish to consider. Keeping this list updated yearly and as you add items is extremely important.

Safeguard Your Records

Keep a copy of your important papers, such as insurance policies, mortgages, title, auto and health insurance and inventory records in a convenient place. Make a list of phone numbers of people and companies that you will need to talk to if you have damage. If your property is damaged, it will be to your advantage to have access to this information or if you have to evacuate you will need to be able to take this information with you when you go.

AFTER THE STORM

Report Damage to Your Insurance Agent or Insurance Company Immediately

Your agent or company will need to provide you with a claim number. You will need to keep this number and have it available in case you need to contact your company again. Also make sure that if your company is setting up a "Claims Phone Number" that you keep that as well. You will next be contacted by an adjuster representing the company that will want to come and inspect your damage. Make sure that you have taken pictures of your damage before you have made any temporary repairs. Keep these pictures as a record just in case you have to mediate your damages with the insurance company.

Make and Document Emergency Repairs

Your policy probably requires that you make emergency repairs to prevent further damage to your home or contents. Keep all receipts and take photographs of the damage before and after emergency repairs. Your adjuster will advise you as to how to handle reimbursement for the tem¬porary repairs.

Make copies of anything that is given to the adjuster or sent to the insurance company.

Take Precautions if the Damages Re¬quire You to Leave Your Home

Secure your property. Remove valuable items. Lock windows and doors. Contact your insurance agent and leave a phone number where you can be reached. These same precautions should be taken if you are required to evacuate before a storm. If you cannot live in your home after the storm, your insurance company will be able to pay you for "Additional Living Expense" if you qualify. Make sure that you keep all of your receipts as you will need them to get reimbursed from the insurance company.

Looting

Looting has occurred in many communities after a hurricane. Criminals may take advantage of the opportunity to enter evacuated homes and businesses. Local law enforcement agencies and, if necessary, the National Guard will do every¬thing possible to minimize looting. Place jewels and valuables in a sealed freezer bag in your safe deposit box or take them with you when you evacuate.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) recommends every home owner should have an insurance check up with their agent before hurricane season starts. Do I need flood insurance, check on windstorm coverage, do I need more coverage, and what does my policy cover and exclude?

If you rent, DFS recommends that you purchase Renters Insurance to cover your contents in the home or apartment.

There are free consumer guides, including homeowner's insurance information available on our website under the listing of Consumer Help. You will also find an Insurance Library available to answer your questions. Do not forget to download your Homeowner's Financial Tool Kit from www.myfloridacfo.com , helping you make informed decisions when it comes to disasters.

Thunderstorms & Lightning

It doesn't have to be raining for lightning to strike. Almost all lightning will occur within 10 miles of its parent thunder-storm, but it CAN strike much farther than that. Lightning detection equipment has confirmed bolts striking almost 50 miles away, but these are very rare.

Thunderstorms can produce several types of hazardous weather including large hail, damaging winds, flash floods, and tornados. However, lightning is the number one cause of weather related fatalities in Florida averaging 10 fatalities and 40 injuries a year.

Approximately half of the deaths and injuries occur during outdoor recreational activities, about 40% of those occur on the water.

Where to Go

The safest location during a thunderstorm is inside a large enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring. These include shopping centers, schools, office buildings, and private residences. If lightning strikes the building, the plumbing and wiring will conduct the electricity more efficiently than a human body. If no buildings are available, then an enclosed metal vehicle such as an automobile, van, or school bus makes a decent alternative.

Where NOT to Go

Not all types of buildings or vehicles are safe during thunderstorms. Buildings are NOT SAFE (even if they are "grounded") if they have exposed openings. These include beach shacks, metal sheds, picnic shelters/pavilions, carports, and baseball dugouts. Porches are dangerous as well.

Convertible vehicles offer no safety from lightning, even if the top is "up". Other vehicles which are NOT SAFE during lightning storms are those which have open cabs, such as golf carts, tractors, and construction equipment.

Remember, it is not the rubber tires of a vehicle that protect you from lightning. The metal shell of a vehicle gives the electricity from the lightning a path to flow around you.

What to Do

Once inside a sturdy building, stay away from electrical appliances and plumbing fixtures. You may want to unplug valuable electrical equipment so they will not be damaged. As an added safety measure, go to an interior room. If you are inside a vehicle, roll the windows up, and avoid contact with any conducting paths leading to the outside of the vehicle such as radios, CB's, and the ignition or you could be badly burned if lightning strikes.

What NOT to Do

Lightning can travel great distances through power lines, especially in rural areas.

Do not use electrical appliances, including corded telephones and desktop computers, unless it is an emergency. Cordless phones, cell phones, laptop and tablet computers are safe to use.

Stay away from the windows and do not take a shower or use the bathtub.

What should I do if I am in a boat on the open water during a thunderstorm?

Thunderstorms over the coastal waters in Florida are generally unpredictable. Even with the best weather reports, boaters can still be caught in open waters when a thunderstorm develops. With or without a lightning protection system, it is critical to take additional precautions to protect yourself.

Stay in the center of the cabin, if so designed. If there is no cabin, stay low in the boat. Don't be a stand-up lightning rod!

Keep arms and legs in the boat. Don't dangle them over the side.

Stop fishing, water skiing, scuba diving, swimming or other water activities when there is lightning or even when weather conditions look threatening. Lightning can strike well ahead of a storm.

Disconnect and do not use or touch the major electronic equipment, including the radio, throughout the duration of the storm.

Lower, remove or tie down the radio antenna and other protruding lightning protection system.

To the degree possible, avoid making contact with two components connected to the system at the same time. For example, the gear levers and the spotlight may both be connected to the system. If you have a hand on both when lightning strikes, the path of the electric current could be directly through your heart—a very deadly path!

At least one person on board should be competent in CPR and First Aid. Many individuals struck by lightning can be saved with prompt First Aid.

Heat Emergencies

Heat emergencies are of three types: heat cramps (caused by loss of salt), heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration) and heat stroke (shock).

Remove the victim from the heat and have him lie down. Apply cool compresses, elevate the feet, drink fluids and use a fan to blow cool air. Get medical help if needed.

Heat emergencies are easily preventable by taking precautions in hot weather. If the problem isn't addressed, heat cramps (caused by loss of salt from heavy sweating) can lead to heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration), which can progress to heat-stroke.

Heatstroke, the most serious of the three, can cause shock, brain damage, organ failure, and even death.

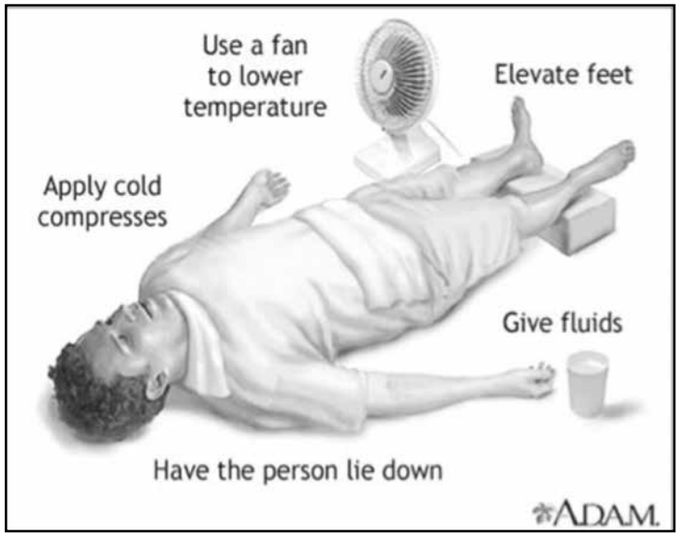
The early symptoms of a heat emergency include: Profuse sweating, fatigue, thirst, and muscle cramps.

Later symptoms of heat exhaustion include: headache, dizziness and lightheadedness, weakness, nausea and vomiting, cool moist skin, and dark urine.

The symptoms of heatstroke include: fever, irrational behavior, confusion, dry, hot and red skin, rapid shallow breathing and pulse, seizures, and unconsciousness

Call 911 if:

- The person loses consciousness at anytime.
- There is any other change in the person's alertness (for example, confusion or seizures).
- Fever (temp above 104°F)
- The person shows signs of shock (bluish lips and finger-nails and decreased alertness).
- Other symptoms of heat stroke are present (like rapid pulse or rapid breathing).
- The person's condition does not improve, or worsens despite treatment.



Prevention

- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in hot weather
- Rest frequently and seek shade when possible.
- Avoid exercise or strenuous physical activity outside during hot or humid weather.
- Drink plenty of fluids every day. Drink more fluids before, during, and after physical activity.
- Be especially careful to avoid overheating if you are taking drugs that impair heat regulation, or if you are overweight or elderly.

Dealing with Traumatic Events

Plan Ahead

Whatever the crisis, some planning before the disaster can usually help family members react wisely. Families that work together to prepare for the problem will cope better than those who do not. Consider how your children might react in a disaster.

What would your own reactions be? The crisis can affect each person's emotional and physical well being. Plan in advance how to deal with the situation. Follow the advice in this booklet. Discuss and practice plans with family members before a disaster strikes. Work together to help everyone understand the procedures.

Venting Feelings

Listening: In times of trouble and crisis, many people need someone who will just listen. Talking about the experience helps the burden seem a little lighter and easier to bear. If you are feeling "blue" or "down," you may want to contact a friend or neighbor, a family member, your pastor or rabbi, or someone else you feel you can really talk to as a friend.

If you find yourself called upon to listen to a friend or neighbor who just wants to talk, please listen. Some people will feel very much alone and afraid; others will blame themselves and wonder, "Why Me?" They are not really looking for an answer to that question, but rather are saying, "How can I endure this?" "How can I go on?" Solutions, answers, and advice aren't necessary. Just listen and let the troubled person talk.

Providing Support

Sometimes people, who are very upset or frightened, later are embarrassed about expressing those feelings. They may feel "weak," or that they have "dumped" on you. Reassure your friend by saying that his/her feelings are normal and perfectly understandable. Be sure that your friend knows you are available to listen again, if he or she needs to talk. Help her/him to look toward the future, when things will be better.

If you are concerned that someone is very depressed and you do not feel you are able to help, be sure he/she does get help from a trained professional. Suggest a counselor, member of the religious community, social worker, or support group to help your friend through this period.

Coping With Children's Emotions

Remember that children mirror their parent's anxieties. Be calm to reduce your children's fears.

Take something familiar such as a favorite toy or book into a new situation. This helps a child feel more secure.

In a crisis situation a child may demonstrate unusually childish behavior. This is normal for a child who is frightened and who doesn't understand a situation as serious as a hurricane.

Most children are not capable of understanding the magnitude and severity of a crisis situation. Be understanding and patient.

Cold Weather Recommendations

Although Southwest Florida basks in a subtropical climate most of the year, occasional arctic cold fronts can invade the area causing frosts and/or freezes. Damage to vegetable and citrus crops is the most common result. Contact County Extension Services for further information.

- Dress in layered clothing and wear some kind of head cover.
- Keep pets inside; when necessary walk them on the grass (not the cold sidewalk).
- Protect livestock and other animals with adequate shelter, extra feed and supplemental heat.
- Bring potted plants inside.
- Cover outdoor plants with burlap or cloth. Cold will penetrate plastic.
- Check space heaters for sufficient ventilation.
- Do not refuel kerosene heaters inside.
- Make sure fireplace flues are working properly.
- Check extension cords for breaks and/or fraying.
- Do not use charcoal or gas grills indoors. They produce deadly carbon monoxide fumes!

Floods

What Causes Flooding?

Because of the low land elevations and the high water tables over much of our area, flooding is likely to occur in some areas during summer showers and thunderstorms. A storm with a considerable amount of rain in a short period of time will cause flooding in low-lying areas throughout the county even though the canal network and drainage ditches will alleviate some flooding.

What Protective Measures Do I Need To Take For Floods?

Protective measures are broken down into four stages; Preparatory stage, Flood Warning, During the Flood and After the Flood.

Preparatory Stage

1. Keep a stock of food that requires no cooking.
2. Keep a first aid kit available.
3. Keep your vehicle fueled.
4. Consider purchasing flood insurance for your home and belongings (Check the insurance section of this guide for further information).
5. Turn to radio or television or NOAA Weather Radio for flood warnings.
6. Obey warnings from emergency officials; evacuate when notice is issued.
7. Know your evacuation zone and route to a place of safety.
8. Know what supplies to take with you.
9. Shut off electricity and water to your home prior to leaving.
10. Be cautious and avoid flood prone areas when evacuating.

Steps should be taken to reduce property losses.

1. Move furniture to upper floors or higher locations.
2. Sandbags can help slow down flood waters from reaching your possessions.
3. Retrofitting, such as building flood walls or elevating a structure is a way of minimizing loss due to flooding.

Know what your current insurance policy does and does not cover. Coverage may be subject to change with certain improvements to your home and require adherence to certain regulations.

Flood Warning Stage

1. Store drinking water in sterile, covered containers.
2. Move valuable objects higher. Place them on shelves, tables and countertops.
3. Turn off electricity.

During The Flood Stage

1. Stay on higher ground.
2. Do not drive on a flooded road.
3. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground.
4. Don't attempt to wade across a flowing stream that is above your knees.
5. Don't allow children to play in standing water. It may be contaminated with chemicals or sewage.

After The Flood Stage

1. Do not eat fresh food that has come into contact with floodwater.
2. Drink only bottled or previously stored water.
3. Stay away from disaster areas. You may hamper rescue recovery operations.
4. Do not handle live electrical equipment.
5. Report downed power lines to the local law enforcement authorities.
6. Keep tuned to local radio and television stations for instructions on how to obtain medical care and emergency assistance such as water, food, clothing, shelter and updated weather reports and conditions.

The County maintains drainage channels and ditches for storm water management purposes; the Public Works Department maintains them on a regular basis. These drainage systems are vitally important and should be kept free of debris and litter. State law prohibits dumping in these waterways. Violations should be reported to your local Sheriff's Office.

Tornadoes

What Is A Tornado?

A Tornado is a violent storm with whirling winds of up to 300 miles per hour. It appears as a funnel shaped cloud, from gray to black in color, which extends to the ground from the base of the thunderstorm.

A tornado spins like a top and may sound like the roaring of an airplane or locomotive. In Florida, summer tornados generally move at speeds less than 20 MPH and can move in any direction. Winter tornados tend to move at speeds less than 40 MPH and generally move from the southwest to northeast. Their direction of travel can be erratic and may change suddenly. These short-lived storms are the most violent of all atmospheric phenomena and the most destructive, over a small area.

When Can A Tornado Occur?

Most tornados in Florida are likely to occur between 3 PM to 8 PM during the months of June, July, and August; however, they can occur at any time, often with little or no warning. Fewer tornados occur in the winter and spring. Most tornados in Florida are considered weak with winds of 50 to 100 MPH. However, if a tornado occurs in the colder part of the year it tends to be stronger than those in the summer. In 2006 a strong summer tornado with wind speeds over 110 MPH occurred in Port Charlotte and injured 3 people and causing $500K in property damage. On September 16th, 2007 a pair of tornados caused around $4M in damages to Cape Coral and Fort Myers Beach, with minor injuries. Tornados, that form over the Gulf, are called waterspouts.

Tornados often form in the front right of hurricanes that move in from the Gulf of Mexico.

Tornado Watch or Tornado Warning?

The National Weather Service broadcasts severe weather conditions over the emergency alerting system as well as NOAA Weather Radio (see page 28 for the NOAA weather station in your area).

When they post a tornado watch they want the public to know that conditions are right for a tornado. When a tornado warning is posted for a given area, a tornado has been sighted or has been detected on radar. The warning will include those cities in the path of the storm. In general, a watch means, "Caution, Watch the Sky" and a warning means "Danger, Take Cover".

What protective actions should I take for Tornadoes?

For Tornado Watches:

When conditions are right for a tornado, there are a few things, listed below, you should do:

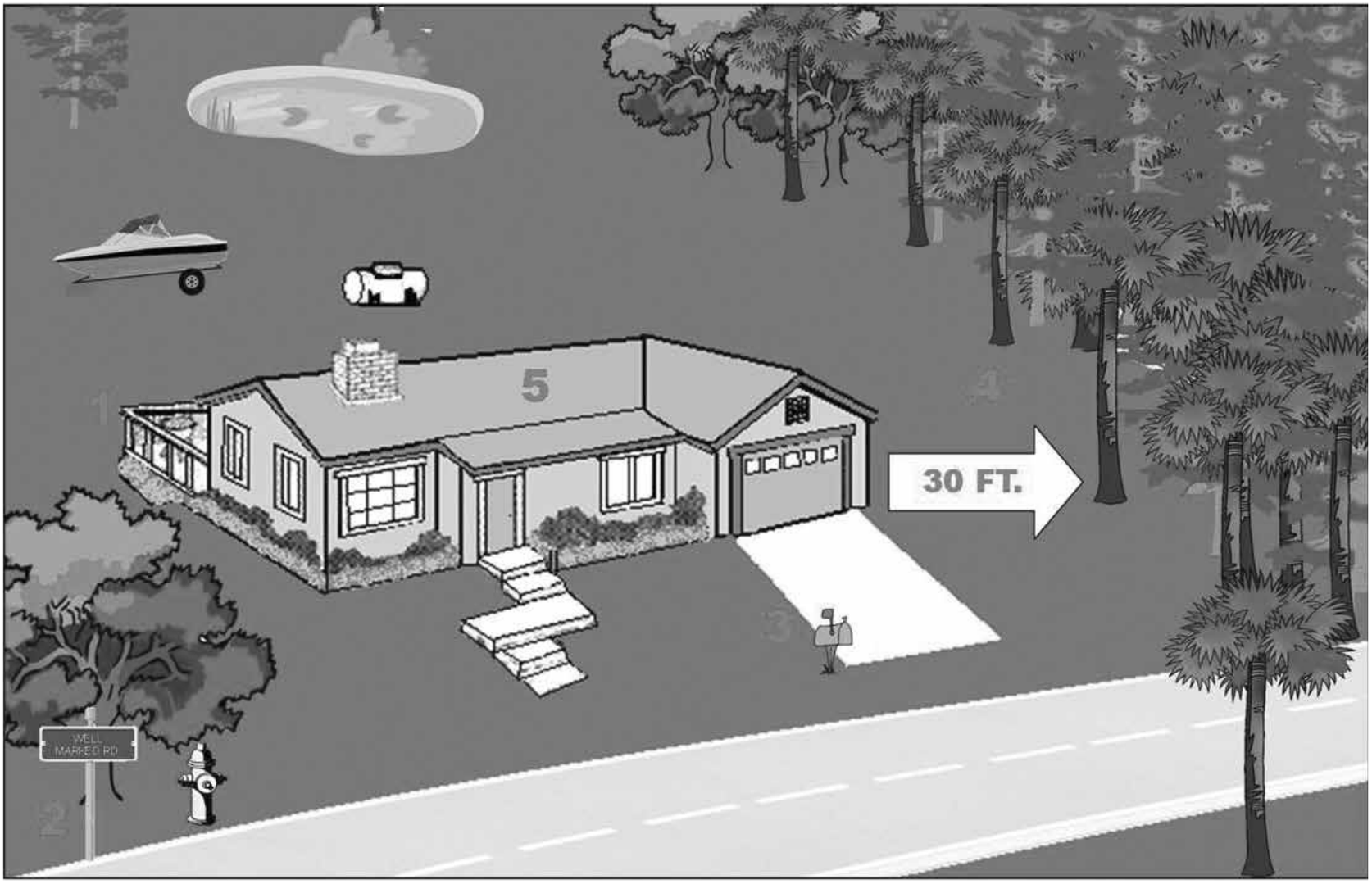
1. Stay tuned to a local weather station or listen to your NOAA Weather Radio (page 28).
2. Secure any loose objects outdoors, or move them inside.
3. Survey local structures for the most suitable shelter.
4. Keep watching the sky to the south and southwest. If you see any funnel shaped clouds, report them immediately to the nearest law enforcement agency and take cover.

For Tornado Warnings:

This means a tornado has been spotted near your area or is predicted to come your way. TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!! Do not leave shelter until you are sure no further danger exists. Remember, there is no guaranteed safe place during a tornado. Here are some examples of places you may be in:

1. In a Motor Vehicle: The least desirable place to be during a tornado is in a motor vehicle. Never try to outrun a tornado in your car. Stop your vehicle and get out. Seek shelter elsewhere. Do not get under or next to your vehicle. A ditch or ground depression will help, if a tornado shelter is not nearby.
2. At School: Follow the school disaster plan. Stay away from auditoriums, gymnasiums, and other areas with wide, free-span roofs. Go into center-hallways and stay away from windows.
3. Open Country: Move away from the tornado's projected path at right angles. Seek shelter in a ditch, ravine, or culvert. Even a low spot in the ground will give you some protection. Stay away from trees and remember to protect your head.
4. In a Home or Condo: The best place to go is the innermost hallway on the lowest floor. An interior closet is relatively safe. An interior bathroom is even better. The walls are close together and the bathtub, sink, and toilet help support debris in case the house collapses. AVOID WINDOWS, since flying debris does most of the killing. The worst kind of flying debris is broken glass. DO NOT open any windows to equalize pressure when a tornado approaches. If a tornado actually gets close enough for the pressure drop to be experienced, the strong winds have probably already caused the most significant damage. Opening windows, in fact, may actually increase damage.
5. In a Mobile or Manufactured Home: These homes are easy to damage by flying debris and are one of the least desirable places to be during a tornado. If a tornado approaches, seek other shelter immediately. Go to a tornado shelter on foot, if possible. Do not drive your car. Do not get under your mobile home. If no other shelter is available, lie down in a ditch or a ground depression.

Wildfire Safety Tips



Protect Your Home and Family from a Devastating Wildfire While Enjoying the Serenity of Nature

1. Keep the surface and area beneath decks, sheds, propane tanks and boats free of debris, leaves and flammable vegetation. Maintain a 3- to 5-foot space around your house and all attachments that is "fuel free" — no flammable mulch, woodpiles, or plants that can allow fire to touch the house.
2. A well marked non-flammable street sign makes it easier to find your home. Ensure that trees and shrubs within the first 30 feet of your home are healthy, spaced apart, and not overhanging the house. A pond or a fire hydrant aids firefighters to quickly access water to extinguish flames.
3. An address on a mailbox or house makes it easier for first responders to find your home. A wide enough drive and paved road mades it easier for first responders in larger vehicles to quickly render aid. Have two ways out of your neighborhood just in case one way is blocked. Mow the lawn regularly and water wisely.
4. Keep the woods 30 feet beyond your house and attachments. Give yourself added protection with "fuel breaks" such as driveways, gravel walkways, and lawns.
5. Clean out gutters and downspouts of debris and leaves. Make sure you have a non-flammable roof covering and assembly. Your roof is the most vulnerable spot for firebrands that blow in and collect.

For more Firewise tips, please call your local Florida Forest Service at 863-462-5160 or visit **FreshFromFlorida.com/Wildfire**

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE Agriculture & Consumer Services

Wells & Septic Systems Before & After Flooding

Wells — Well Water Safety

Did you know heavy rainfall from a tropical storm or hurricane can make your well water unsafe to use? If you are unsure what impact flooding has had on your well water, don't use it for drinking, making beverages, cooking, washing dishes, brushing your teeth, and washing areas of your body that may have been cut or injured until you've done one of the following:

- Bring water to a rolling boil for one minute; cool before use.
- Disinfect water using unscented house¬hold bleach (4-6% active ingredients); add 8 drops (about 1/8 teaspoon) per gallon of water, stir and let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy, repeat the procedure.

If your well has been flooded, call your local health department for information on how to get a sample of your well water and where to bring it for bacteriological testing. As a precaution, you may wish to attempt to disinfect your well before taking a sample. Your local health department has information on how to disinfect a potentially contaminated well. If after disinfection, the test reveals bacteria, both the well and water system need to be disinfected to ensure all un-healthy agents are destroyed. Florida Department of Health — Lee County has step-by-step instructions on how to conduct well disinfection on its website (www.leechd.com), click on "Services," at the top of the home page, then click on Environmental Engineering." After disinfection, the water needs to be tested again to verify it is safe to drink.

Serious Health Risks

Disease-producing micro-organisms in contaminated water pose serious health risks to you and your family. These micro-organisms include viruses, bacteria, cysts, and parasites with health effects that can range from gastrointestinal infection to death. Don't take a chance on well safety. Be sure your well is properly constructed and maintained. Florida health departments recommend all wells be tested annually and after heavy rains or flooding.

Septic Systems — Preparing your Septic System for Flooding

Did you know empty septic tanks are buoyant and can "pop" out of the ground during flooding? During Florida's tropical storm and hurricane season (June to November) make sure your septic tanks are full of liquid—don't have them pumped during this time. That's a simple precaution that can help your septic system survive flooding.

Saturated Drain fields can be a Health Hazard

When flooding or saturated soil conditions persist, a private septic system cannot function properly. In fact, organ¬isms such as viruses and bacteria can enter the groundwater and contaminate your drinking water supply.

Again, don't drink your well water until it is tested and proven safe! Whenever the water table is high, there is also a risk that sewage could back up into your home. The only way to help prevent this problem is to relieve pressure on the system by using it less, or if possible, not at all.

Do not do laundry or operate the dishwasher, and consider renting a portable toilet until the drain fields dry out.

After the Floodwater Recedes

Once the floodwaters have receded, homeowners need to be aware of the following information as they check their septic systems.

If you have a sewage lift pump in the house or in a pump chamber, shut off its power before inspecting the area to prevent electric shock.

Do not have the septic tank and drain-field repaired until the ground has dried.

Often systems are completely functional when the soil is no longer saturated.

If you suspect your system is damaged, have your septic tank profession¬ally inspected and serviced immediately.

Only trained, state licensed specialists should clean or repair septic tanks because tanks may contain dangerous gasses. Call your county health department for contact information for septic system contractors who work in your area.

All repairs must be permitted and inspected by your county health department.

For additional information on issues such as disinfecting areas affected by floodwater or sewage back-up, contact your county health department's Environmental Health office or the Health Department's website.

Evacuation Quick Tips!

If you need to evacuate your home because of flooding or hurricane threat, place the following items in a plastic bag and bring them with you:

- Your children's immunization and other important health and insurance records.
- Your insurance/ Medicare/ Medicaid cards, and Driver's license or photo ID.
- Each family member's medications, along with dosage information, and physicians' contact information. If you prefer, you can download and print a convenient form for this purpose at www.leecountyinjuryprevention.org. Click on the ICE link and click on Medication and Contact Form. Each form has room for medical information for two people living in the same house-hold. If you are in an area prone to flooding and evacuation, you may want to gather the documents above in advance. If the order to evacuate is given, having everything ready to go at a moment's notice will save you trying to find these items in a hurry.

Because It Can Be a Matter of Life & Death

The Family Preparedness Guide is an excellent, thorough resource for evacuation and many kinds of emergencies you and your loved ones could face one day. It covers creating a disaster plan for your family including supplies needed, financial and medical records, family communications, pet care and much, much more.

The guide, which includes information for disabled persons, may be accessed on most county health department web-sites, including the Florida Department of Health — Lee County website at www.leechd.com. (Click on "Services," then "Public Health Preparedness.") The guide is in brochure format for ease of printing and use. Why not print out the guide for family members and friends and share copies well before hurricane season.

Hazardous Materials

CHEMICAL…

the word reminds us of the latest news story about an accident or environmental damage from improper storage, use or disposal of chemicals. However, many aspects of modern life are made possible or improved by responsible use and handling of chemicals.

AROUND THE HOUSE

When we think of hazardous chemi-cals, we tend to think of manufacturing plants, train cars or trucks. While this is valid, we should also consider our own kitchen cabinets, garage, pool and other places in our home where potentially harmful chemicals are a part of our everyday life. We become so familiar with them that we may have forgotten that they can injure or even kill us.

Here are a few common household chemicals and their hazards.

- Chlorine (pool) – toxic fumes, cor-rosive and highly reactive
- Muriatic Acid (pool) – corrosive, toxic by inhalation and highly reactive
- Ammonia – toxic fumes and very reactive with other common cleaners
- Lighter Fluid – flammable
- Propane (grill) – highly flammable
- Gasoline – flammable with vapors that are heavier than air and can travel to an ignition source
- Motor Oil – combustible
- Weed Killer – toxic by ingestion or absorption through skin
- Bug Killer – toxic by inhalation or absorption
- Drain Cleaner – toxic or corrosive
- Nail Polish Remover – flammable
- Paint – flammable
- Fertilizer – toxic, possibly flammable or explosive
- No matter how comfortable you are with a product, here are some important safety reminders:
- ALWAYS follow label directions
- Never mix chemicals
- Use only for approved purposes and in approved concentrations
- Store and dispose of safely, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Keep away from children
- Never store in containers that look like food or drink
- Understand first aid directions
- Keep the number of your local poison control center handy

If you suspect someone has been exposed to a chemical, consult your physician or FL Poison Information Network at: 1-800-222-1222

If injuries are serious or the victim has trouble breathing, call 911!

TRANSPORTATION

Everyday hazardous materials are transported safely by highway, rail, air and sea. Because of the design, construction and safety features of chemical transportation containers, significant releases are rare. However, there are occasional accidents. In an accident you can be affected either at home or on the highway. If you are at home you will be notified through the media or local public safety agencies. Follow instructions quickly and carefully. You may be ordered to evacuate or to "shelter in place" depending on the chemicals involved. If ordered to evacuate do so immediately.

Shelter in Place means to stay inside where you are. If you are directed to shelter in place, close all windows and doors and turn off the air conditioner. Use duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal around doors, windows and other openings. If this is not available, damp towels or blankets can be used. The goal is to prevent outside air from entering your home. Do not go outside or open doors or windows, until local authorities tell you it is safe. Once the all clear is given, you should ven-tilate your home by opening doors and windows to purge any possible contaminates.

If you see or are involved in a traffic accident, take special care to avoid hazardous chemicals. Do not walk or drive through a vapor cloud or spill. Pay attention to any placards – diamond shaped panels with numbers and/or symbols on them. Provide the placard number to authorities. Small quantities of hazardous material may not have a placard.

The most important step to protect yourself and others is to avoid or reduce exposure to the chemical. If able, evacuate. Move crosswind to safety and keep other people from entering the area.

Nuclear Power Plants

Florida has three nuclear power plants: Crystal River, north of Tampa; St. Lucie, north of Palm Beach; and Turkey Point, south of Miami. Even under worst-case conditions, an accidental release at any of these plants should not spread dangerous radioactivity over Southwest Florida. However, we might receive evacuees from other counties. They pose no health risk. However, agricultural products from those areas would not be permitted to enter into our food supply.

Radioactive Materials

It is possible that a transportation accident could involve a radioactive substance. These materials are packed in limited quantities in very strong, well marked containers. If you see a marked package or suspect radioactive material may be present, move away from the area and advise emergency responders. Do not attempt to move it yourself.

Biohazard Material

Another hazardous material that may be seen in transit is biohazard material. Healthcare facilities generate and dispose of this material, which may at first glance appear to be ordinary garbage.

Biohazard material could expose you to disease causing agents. As with other hazardous materials, you can usually avoid exposure by not contacting or handling the material or container. Call the authorities and explain the situation.

Preparing for Acts of Terrorism

What is Terrorism?

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as "the unlawful use of force against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in the furtherance of political or social objectives."

Terrorist acts are intended to:

- Cause mass casualties & panic
- Produce a loss of critical resources
- Disrupt vital services and the economy

What are the most likely targets?

- Public assembly areas
- Public and government buildings
- Mass transit
- Places of high economic impact
- Telecommunications facilities
- Historic or symbolic places
- Amusement parks
- Special events
- Large structures and bridges

Visiting these places is part of our way of life. You should not avoid them, but have a heightened sense of awareness when you visit them.

The United States is in the midst of numerous terror related issues which include:

- Christmas Day Underwear Bombing
- Five Americans held in Pakistan
- Chicago Businessman charged with planning the attacks in Mumbai
- Denver man charged with terror plot
- American Somali Terrorist Connections
- Radicalized Americans such as the Fort Hood attacker
- And the possibility of Guantanamo detainees being brought to the United States

Many attacks have been thwarted by alert citizens and law enforce-ment such as:

- Plot to bomb the Islamic Center of Pinellas Park, Fl. by Robert J. Gold-stein in retaliation for Palestinian suicide bombings of Israel (2002)
- Plot to blow up the Transcontinental Pipeline (Gulf Coast to NY) by Michael C. Reynolds (2005)
- Plot to blow up the Sears Tower, by Nasreal Batiste of Miami, FL (2005)
- Plot to blow up Fort Dix, NJ. US military base by six radical Islamist (2007)
- Plot to blow up a jet fuel artery at JFK Airport by 4 Islamist extremist, led by Russell Defraites of Brooklyn, NY (2007)

What is the State of Florida doing to prepare for Acts of Terrorism?

According to state statue the Florida Department of Law Enforcement has established 7 Regional Domestic Security Task Forces throughout Florida. It is the job of these task forces to perform the following functions:

- Assist in assessing, defining and monitoring the State's vulnerability to the impacts of a terrorist event.
- Assist in determining state and local government ongoing needs (personnel, materials, planning and training) to effectively respond to a major terrorist incident.
- Work with local emergency management to develop safe and efficient response plans for regional resources and conduct exercises to test and refine the capability of the task force to deploy regional response assets.

How can I help?

Law Enforcement, Public Safety and Public Health officials have plans and procedures for responding to all types of hazardous situations. It is critical to be well informed and remain watchful of things around you. Report anything that appear suspicious or out of the ordinary by calling 911 or your local FBI office.

How can I prepare?

Learn shelter-in-place procedures and prepare a sheltering kit. Shelter-in-place procedures are used for chemical or biological attacks (or even a hazardous spill)! Procedures for sheltering in place include:

- Identify a safe room in the home with as few doors and windows possible. Bring/store your disaster supply kit in the safe room.
- Shutting off the ventilation system and latching all doors and windows to reduce airflow from the outside.
- Use precut plastic sheeting to cover openings where air can enter the room, including doors, windows, vents, and electrical outlets.
- Tape plastic sheeting around all doors and windows using duct tape to ensure a good seal.
- Listen to a battery-powered radio for the all clear. Chemicals used in an attack will be carried on the wind and will dissipate over time.

If there is an explosion:

- Take cover if heavy debris is falling. Leave the building as quickly as possible.
- NEVER take an elevator if there is a fire or if you question the structural integrity of the building.
- Use fire escapes and assist individuals with physical disabilities to evacuate.

When you travel:

- If you are traveling to a foreign country, check the U.S. Department of State web page at http://travel.state.gov/ for any travel advisories or procedure changes. Keep your identification papers in a secure place at all times.
- Check with the airlines in advance for any special safety procedures in place.
- Cooperate with officials who are responsible for security inspections.

As always…***See Something, Say Something!***

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is about:

- Presenting citizens with the facts about what to expect following a major disaster in terms of immediate services.
- Giving the message that citizens share a responsibility for mitigation and prepared-ness.
- Training people in needed life saving skills with an emphasis on rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number.
- Organizing teams so that they are an extension of first responder services offering immediate help to victims until professional services arrive.

The basic CERT training pro-gram educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, in-cluding fire safety, light search and rescue, terrorism awareness, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

Participants receive hands-on and classroom style training to develop their skills. CERT members are a valuable asset because they can assist others in their neighborhood or work-place following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

CERT members support emer-gency response agencies by assisting with public information and preparedness projects in their community, and can pro-vide things like basic first aid and rehab support during planned events and activities. CERT Teams can be called upon to help run emergency shelters or operate Points of Distribution (POD) to help give out emergency supplies after a disaster. CERT is a federally sponsored program recognized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

If you are interested in joining CERT please contact your local Emergency Management Office, or visit: http://www.citizencorps.gov/ cert/index.shtm

StormReady

StormReady is a voluntary program created by the National Weather Service to help communities prepare and protect residents from hazardous weather. StormReady is a nationwide program focused on helping community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local safety program. At this time there are 1868 StormReady sites nationally. StormReady communities are better prepared for hazardous weather conditions through planning, education and awareness.

To be officially StormReady, a community must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center
- Have more than one method of receiving severe weather forecasts and warnings, and alerting the public
- Create a system that monitors local weather conditions
- Promote public readiness through community seminars
- Develop a hazardous weather plan, to include training severe weather spotters (SKYWARN) and training exercises

Currently the following Counties, Communities, Universities and Supporters are StormReady in Southwest Florida:

- Every County in Florida is StormReady
- City of Sanibel, Community (Lee)
- Captiva Island, Community (Lee)
- FSU Ringling Center, University (Sarasota)
- Bonita Bay Subdivision, Supporter (Lee)
- The Brooks Subdivision, Supporter (Lee)
- Pelican Landing, Supporter (Lee)
- Mediterra Subdivision, Supporter (Collier)
- Twin Eagles Subdivision, Supporter (Collier)

To become StormReady, complete the application and submit to your local NWS office. Your application will be reviewed by StormReady Review Board, and a team will visit with you to formally discuss your application. Upon approval, you will receive a formal notification letter from the local NWS Office Director, two StormReady signs and instructions for these and other benefits to your community. StormReady recognition is good for three years from the date of your formal announcement. For more information go to www.stormready.noaa.gov/communities.htm

Resources & Phone Numbers

Emergency Management Offices

Charlotte County 941-833-4000
www.CharlotteCountyFL.com
* * * * *
Desoto County 863-993-4831
www.Desotobocc.com
* * * * *
Glades County 863-946-6020
www.MyGlades.com
* * * * *
Hardee County 863-773-6373
www.HardeeCounty.net/eoc.htm
* * * * *
Hendry County 863-612-4700
www.HendryFLA.net
* * * * *
Highlands County 863-385-1112
www.HCBCC.net
* * * * *
Lee County 239-533-0622
www.LeeEOC.com
* * * * *
Okeechobee County
863-763-3212
www.OkeechobeeEOC.com
* * * * *
Sarasota County 941-861-5000
www.SCGov.net

For Mobile or Manufactured Home Residents

Dept of Highway Safety
& Motor Vehicles
Manufactured Housing Section
Division of Motorist Services
1-850-617-3004
www.flhsmv.gov/mobilehome

Preparedness Videos

Videos in American Sign Language and Voice to help you prepare, visit http://www.floridadisaster.org/Disability/video/index.htm

StormReady

To find out how to become a StormReady Community, please visit www.stormready.noaa.gov

Arson Alert Hotline 1-800-342-5869

You can receive a reward up to $5,000 for information leading to an arrest!

Hurricane Names

2016	2017
Alex	Arlene
Bonnie	Bret
Colin	Cindy
Danielle	Don
Earl	Emily
Fiona	Franklin
Gaston	Gert
Hermine	Harvey
Ian	Irma
Julia	Jose
Karl	Katia
Lisa	Lee
Matthew	Maria
Nicole	Nate
Otto	Ophelia
Paula	Philippe
Richard	Rina
Shary	Sean
Tobias	Tammy
Virginie	Vince
Walter	Whitney

Florida Department of Financial Services (DFS), Tallahassee

Insurance Questions or download your Homeowners Financial Tool Kit
1-877-693-5236
www.myfloridacfo.com
Storm #: 1-800-22-STORM

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/index.shtm

Florida Poison Information Network

1-800-222-1222

If you suspect someone has been exposed to a chemical, consult your physician or call 911!

Solid Waste Management

Customer Service Offices

Charlotte: 941-764-4360
Englewood: 697-4000 x 4360
Glades: 863-675-0124
Hardee: 863-773-5089
Hendry: 863-675-5252
Highlands: 863-402-7786
Lee: 239-533-8000
Okeechobee: 863-357-0111
Sarasota: 941-861-5000

Local Animal Services

Charlotte: 941-764-4320
Desoto: 863-993-4855
Glades: 863-946-6001 ext. 4004
Hardee: 863-773-5089
Hendry: 863-675-3381
Highlands: 863-655-6475
Lee: 239-533-7387
Okeechobee: 941-357-3225
Sarasota: 941-861-9500

Florida Lightning Safety

http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

Department of Homeland Security

http://www.dhs.gov/files/counterterrorism.shtm

Blood Donor Centers

Charlotte

Port Charlotte
941-625-1874

Desoto

Arcadia
866-972-5663

Highlands

Sebring
863-382-4499

Lee

Bonita Springs
239-495-4372

Cape Coral
239-574-3170
239-424-2400

Fort Myers
239-768-9823
239-437-5061
239-343-2333

Okeechobee

Stuart
772-287-3111

Sarasota

Venice
941-492-9202

North Port
941-240-6565

Or to find a center in your area call 1-888-9-DONATE

Hardee County Emergency Information

Important Phone Numbers, Area Code (863)

	Normal Business	Emergency
American Red Cross (Local Chapter)	773-9097	(941) 792-8686
Hardee County Emergency Management	773-6373	911
Wauchula Police Department (non emergency)	773-3265	911
Dept. of Financial Services (Insurance)	877-693-5236	N/A
Federal Emergency Management Agency	(800) 621-3362	TTY (800) 462-7585
Florida Division of Emergency Management	(850) 413-9969	N/A
Bowling Green Police Department	375-2255	911
Hardee County Animal Services	773-5089	773-4144
Hardee County Government	773-9430	N/A
Hardee County Public Safety & EMS	773-4362	911
Hardee County Health Department	773-4161	N/A
Hardee County Sheriff's Office	773-4144	911
Hardee County Recorded Information Line	767-0102	N/A
National Weather Service/Tampa Bay	(813) 645-2323	N/A

Property Protection Measures

In some locations, the contents of buildings can be protected through flood proofing measures such as sandbagging. Hardee County Public Works provides sand and sandbags for any flooding events at no cost to our citizen's. Please contact your local Public Works for distribution points. Come prepared to fill and haul your sandbag. **Shovels are not provided by Public Works!**

Further information on flood mitigation techniques, such as flood proofing and elevation can also be found at the website for the Federal Emergency Management Agency www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/floodplain/index .

Drainage Systems Require Maintenance

Hardee County is interlaced with a system of canals, ditches, and waterways that serve to direct the flow of floodwater. It is most important that these elements of the floodwater drainage system be kept clear of debris and trash that could impede the flow of water during a flood situation.

To report drainage problems in incorporated areas call your city Public Works. In unincorporated Hardee County, call Hardee County Public Works at 773-3272.

Dumping of debris and trash in the drainage system or alteration of the channels is prohibited. Violators should be reported to law enforcement or public works officials.

Re-Entry After A Storm

Gaining access to your residence or business will require a form of identification (Driver's License, electric bill, etc.).

TV Stations

	Affiliate	Local Channel
WEDU	PBS	03
WFLA	NBC	08
WTSP	CBS	10
WTVT	FOX	13
WFTS	ABC	28
WLZE-LP	Univision	51

NOAA Weather Radio

NOAA Weather Radios provide 24-hour continuous broadcasting of current and forecasted weather conditions. The following are the identification or FIPS codes for DeSoto and our adjoining counties:

Hardee **012049**

Lee	012071	Highlands	012055
Okeechobee	012093	Collier	012021
DeSoto	012027	Charlotte	012015
Hendry	012051	Polk	012105

AM Radio

WDBO	580	WJCM	1050
WWTK	730	WLKF	1430
WWCN	770	WTMP	1150
WFLA	970	WWTK	730
WHNC	1250	WZTK	1480
WITS	1340		

FM Radio

WYUU	92.5	WWOJ	99.1
WFLZ	93.3	WJRR	101.1
WSJT	94.1	WTKS	104.1
WCFB	94.5	WRBQ	104.7
WHTQ	96.5	WZSP	105.3
WPCV	97.5	WTZB	105.9
WWRZ	98.3	WZZS	106.9
WMMO	98.9	WBBY	107.3

Local Radio Stations

WZZS	106.9 FM	WWOJ	99.1 FM
WZTK	1480 AM	WITS	1340 AM
WZSP (En Español)	105.3 FM		
WAUC (En Español)	1310 AM		

Websites

www.hardeecounty.net
www.nhc.noaa.gov
www.usatoday.com/weather
www.charlottecountyfl.com
www.lee-county.com
www.floridadisaster.org
www.hardeeso.com
http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tbw

Having a Plan Saves Lives and Property